

# TATTOO LIFE



n° 71

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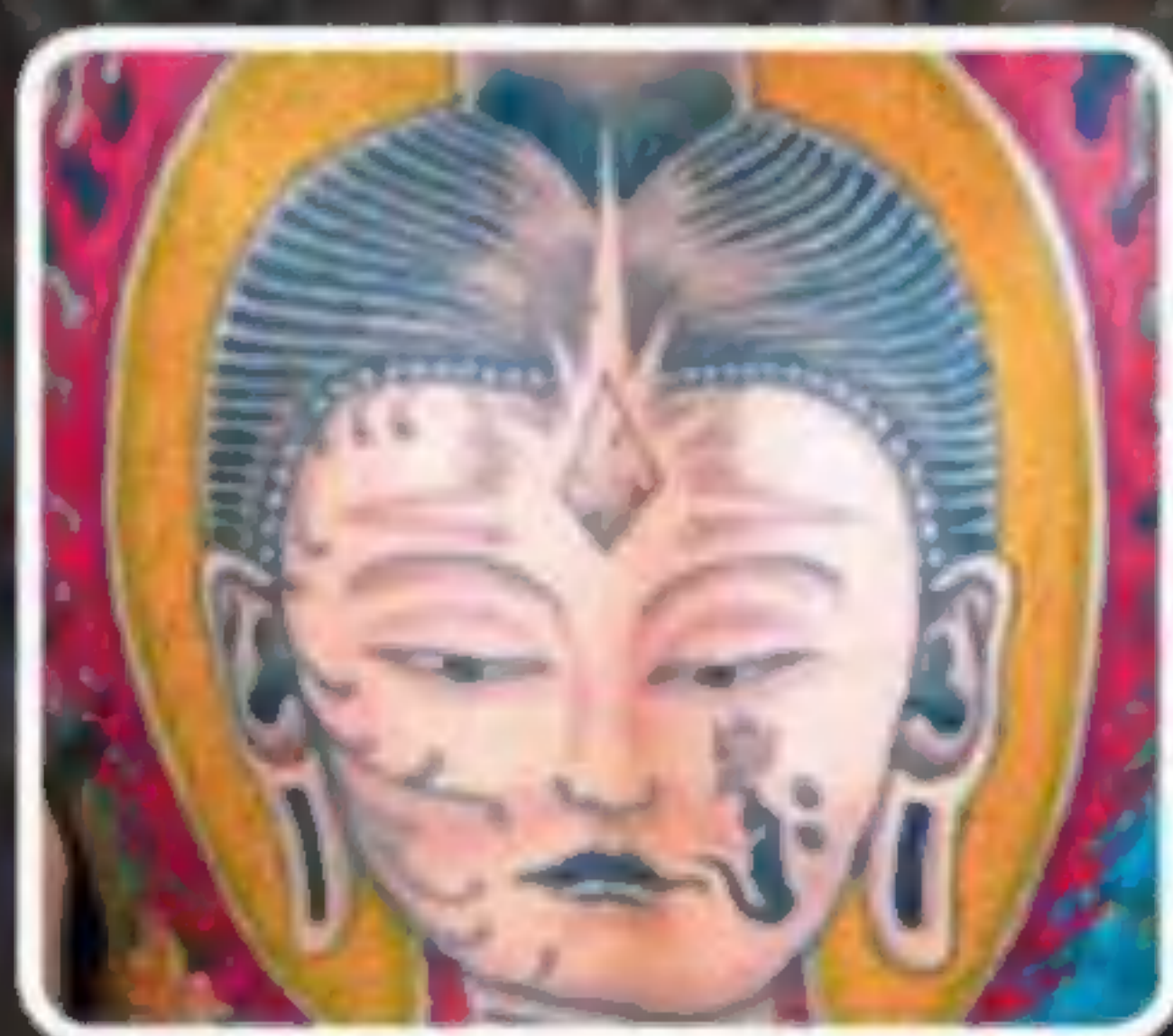
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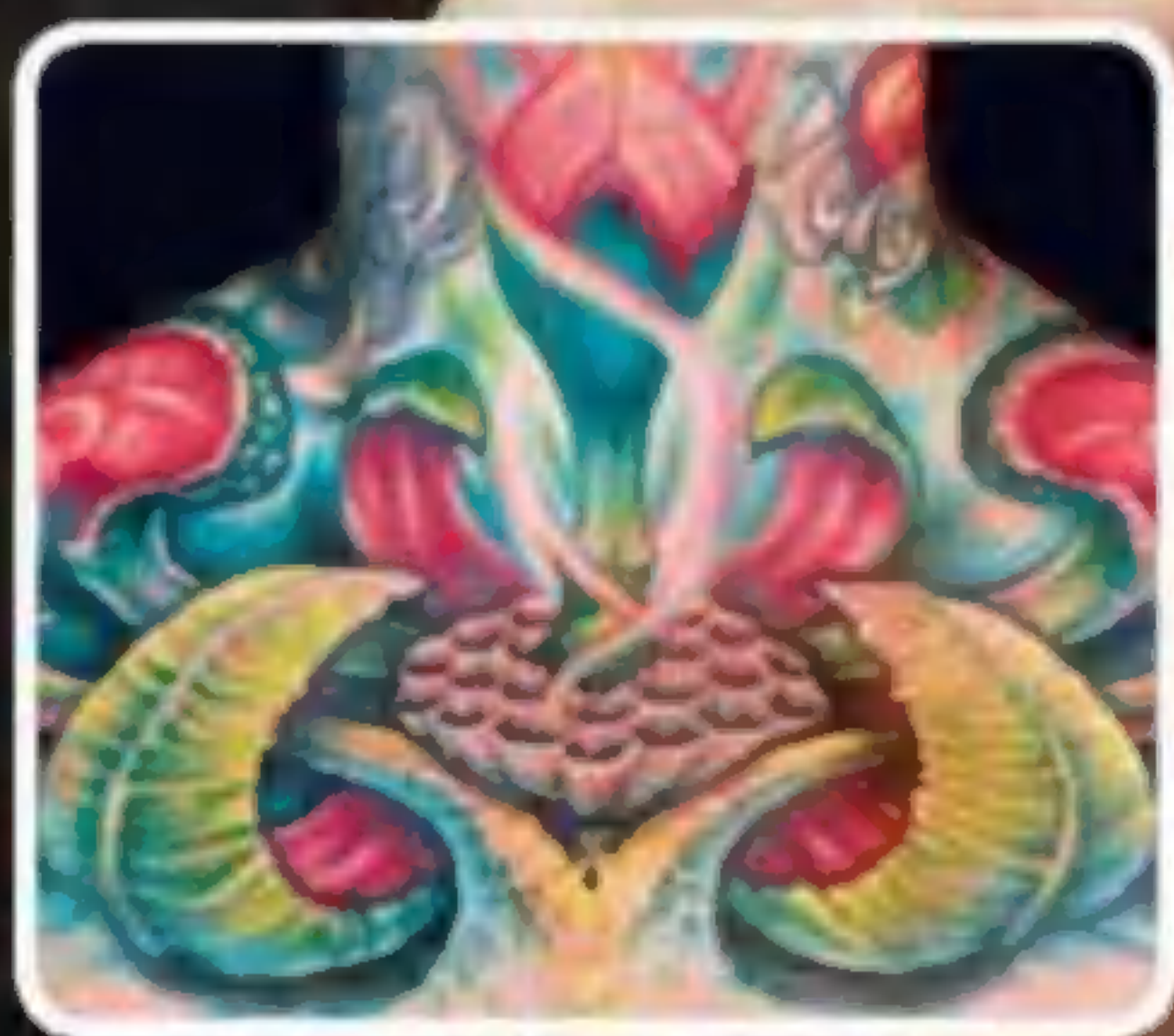
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## TAS

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TATTOO



## NICK BAXTER

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# TATTOO LIFE



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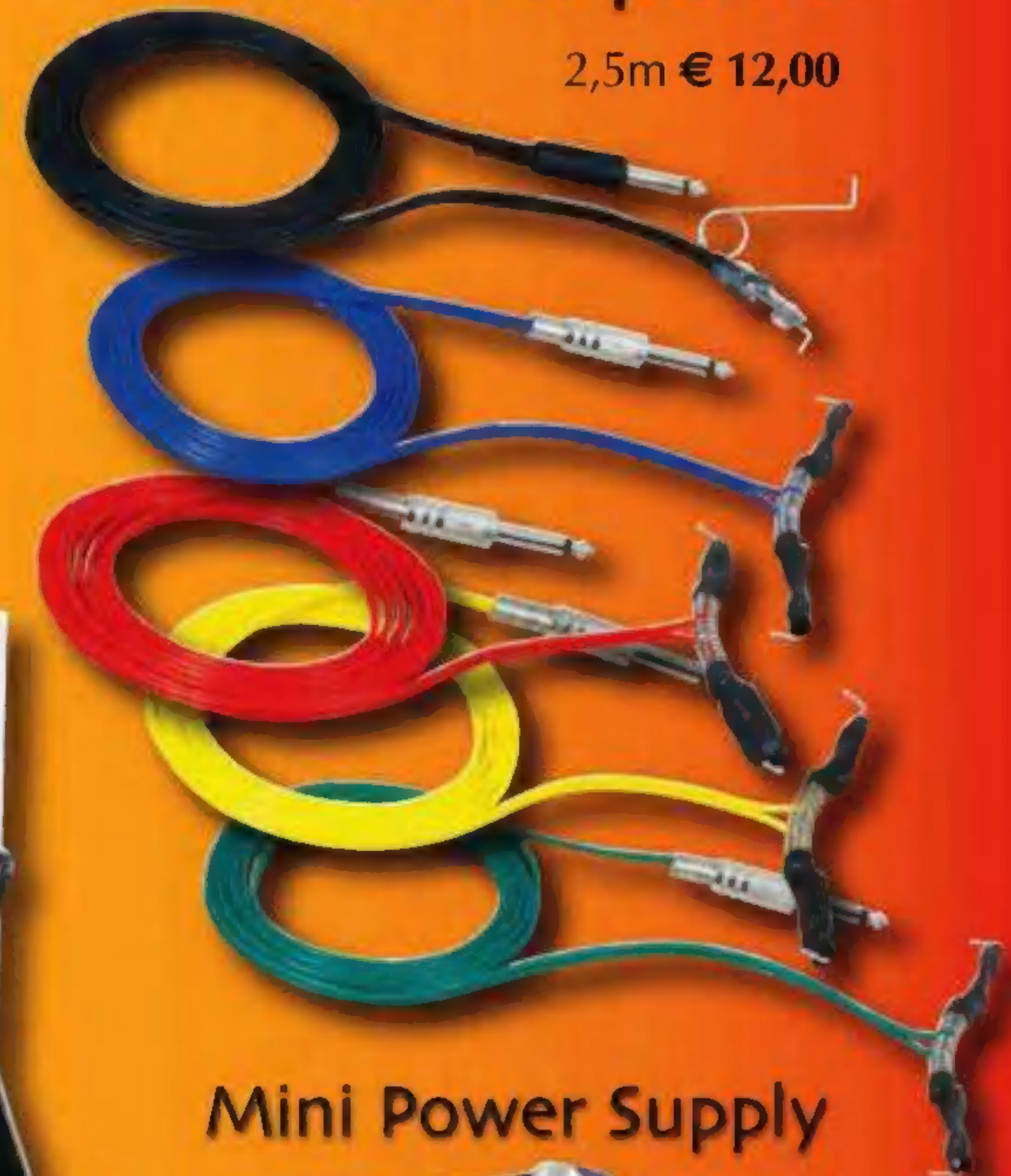
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# editorial

## Times are changing

In the 90's, when I started to work in this field, I personally witnessed the creation of the first forms of tattoo associations. In reality, especially in Italy, these associations didn't work as they were supposed to for various reasons. First of all, internal conflicts and problems. Often famous tattooists demanded a decision-making power different from the newcomers. Secondly, even the unpleasant tendency of considering the association as a sort of trade union category useful to create a sort of monopoly and increase their profits to the detriment of others.

Of course, this wasn't true for everybody. There were also tattooists that worked seriously and tried to organize good associations, but often after years they left because after such hard work they obtained no recognition whatsoever if not criticism and complaints.

At the time (end of the 90's) I opposed all forms of associations because — perhaps I was a bit naïve — I believed tattoo was the maximum expression of individual freedom; tying it down to regulations would have been a sort of contradiction in terms. I often heard people criticize tattooists who worked out of their home but I thought (with a certain dose of romantic idealism) to the sailors who got tattooed during their long journeys, or friends, who developed this passion for tattoos and started tattooing one another. The idea of "association" was to me only an oppressive way to block the younger tattooists and to keep the older ones in their position with their privileges.

I especially considered the desire of some to turn to national and European governments and institutions very dangerous. They were asking for regulations and laws that could lock the world of tattoo in a precise legal cage, but I am convinced that often lawmakers, when they decide to make new laws, do not really take into account the suggestions of a small group of people, even though they are top experts in their field. Demagogy and contingent electoral interests can deviate the intentions of who is responsible for approving new laws in one which is the exact opposite of the purposes for which those laws were requested.

Fifteen years have gone by and the situation has changed enormously in Europe. Nowadays, tattoo art has spread to levels that were unimaginable just a few years ago and of course all European governments have noticed this. These governments more or less urgently are all thinking and drawing up a series of laws to regulate the sector both at community level and state and/or local level. Often, lawmakers don't even know the reality of the tattoo world, its needs and regulations that should assure a correct procedure for the safety of the customer. Just think that in Milan, Italy, where I live, starting from next November every tattoo studio will have to hire a beautician as technical chief of the studio. This law was initially drawn up for massage centers (that often have nothing therapeutic about them) but — since they were at it — they thought it would be a good idea to include also tanning centers and tattoo studios, as if they were the same thing...

At the moment, courses (also paid by tattooists) are being organized where, between teachers of a certain level, there are also people whose pieces would never ever end up on these pages because the work is so poor in quality. And these people do not only teach young tattooists but also professional artists who have been working with tattoo art for over twenty years. Moreover, there are also retailers who taking advantage of legal confusion, try in every way possible to "certify" their materials to gain a certain position of monopoly in the market.

And what should tattooists do? In most cases they just stand by and watch. For this reason, I believe that today it is necessary for national associations to gather together at community level. There must be reference groups that can interact with the various governments and community institutions, and not just passively accept their decisions, that often do not even reflect the reality of this world. There are people that really believe in this possibility such as Tin Tin in Paris, Franco Cecconi in Rome, Dot in Germany etc... but to lead and operate an association first of all there must be the money, lawyers, secretaries and especially everybody must set aside personal and childish feelings. If the tattooist do not come together to try to form a single voice, by the time they realize where their lack of courage in expressing their opinions has brought them, it will be too late.

by Miki Vialetto



Photography: Christian Saint  
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Gold Leaf Body Painting: Michael Hussar  
Makeup: Christina Schock  
Hair: Anthony Michael Cress

## contents

n°71

**08 Spy**  
ARTISTIC CONTAMINATIONS

**10 Shopping**  
LIFE IN STYLE

**12 Music**  
HIGH VOLTAGE FESTIVAL 2011  
By Simone Sacco

**14 New Sounds**  
ECHOES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

**16 Who's who**  
Hiroshi Hirawaka  
Xylography becomes art  
By Horitaka

**20 MUSINK**  
Tattoo convention and music  
festival 2011 at Fairgrounds.  
By Susana Victoria



**28 Cover Girl**  
HARMONY ROSE  
By Simone Sacco



**32 Internet**  
THE BEST SITE ON-LINE

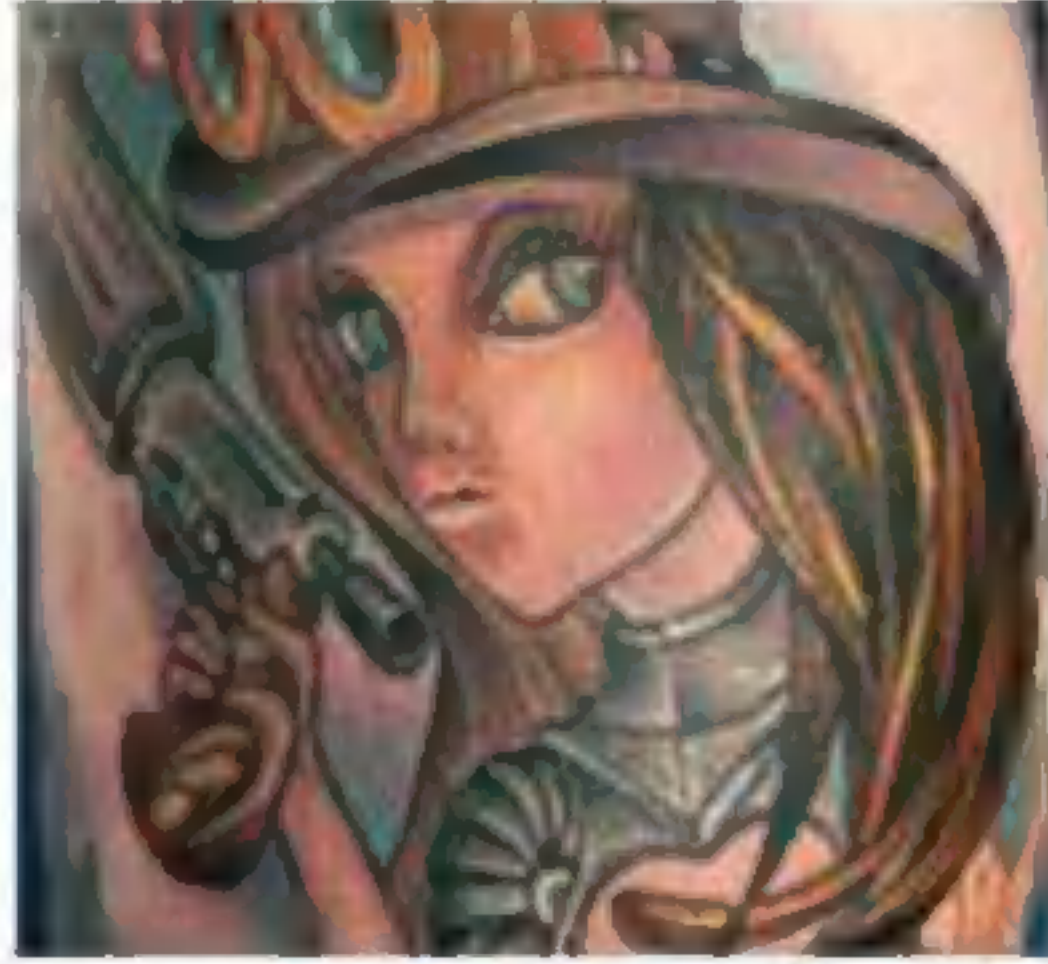


**34 Book**

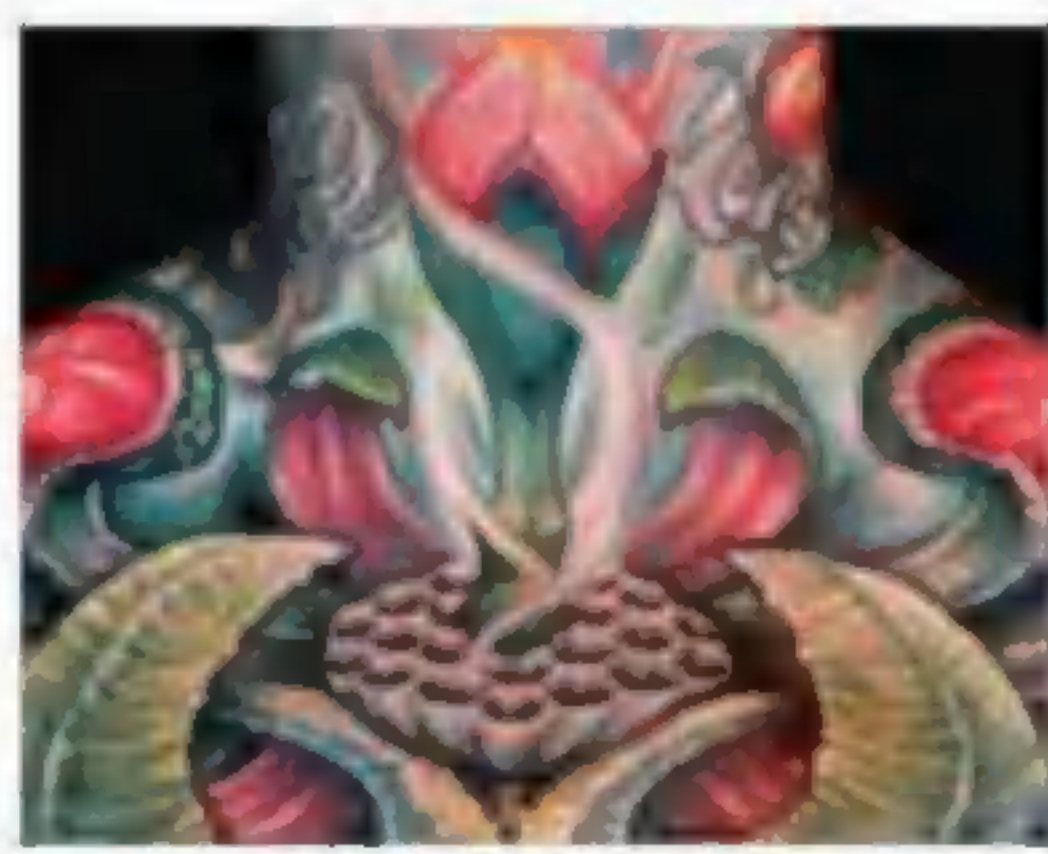
Kokoro and Ryushin  
Two books dedicated to Horiyoshi III  
By **Margherita B.**

**36 DETROIT**

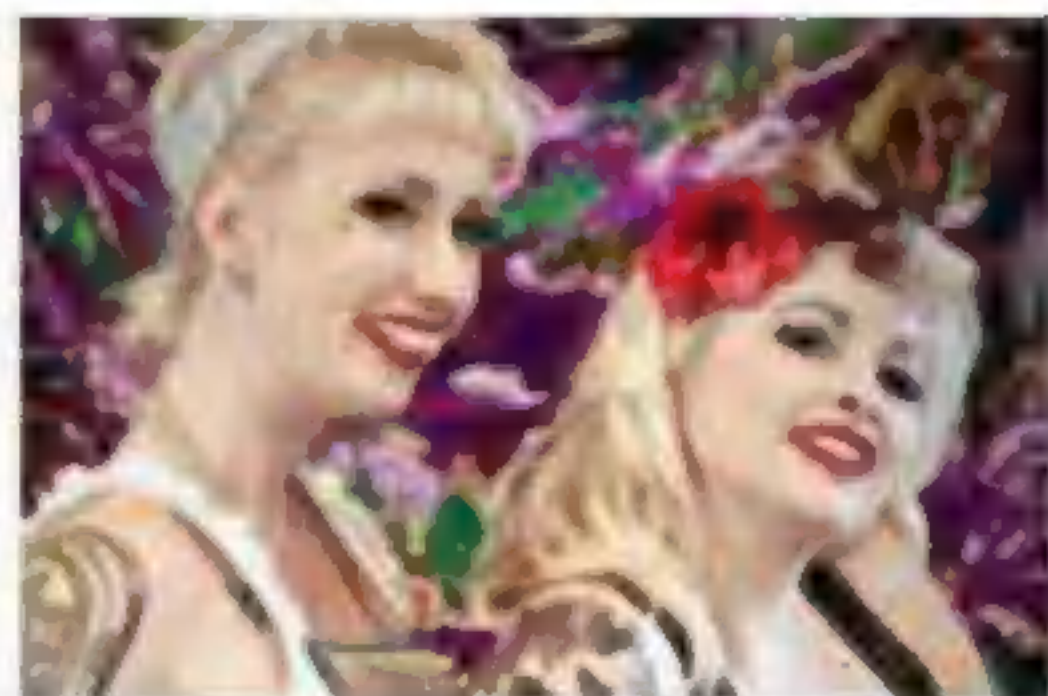
16<sup>th</sup> Annual Motor City Tattoo Expo

**44 NICK BAXTER**

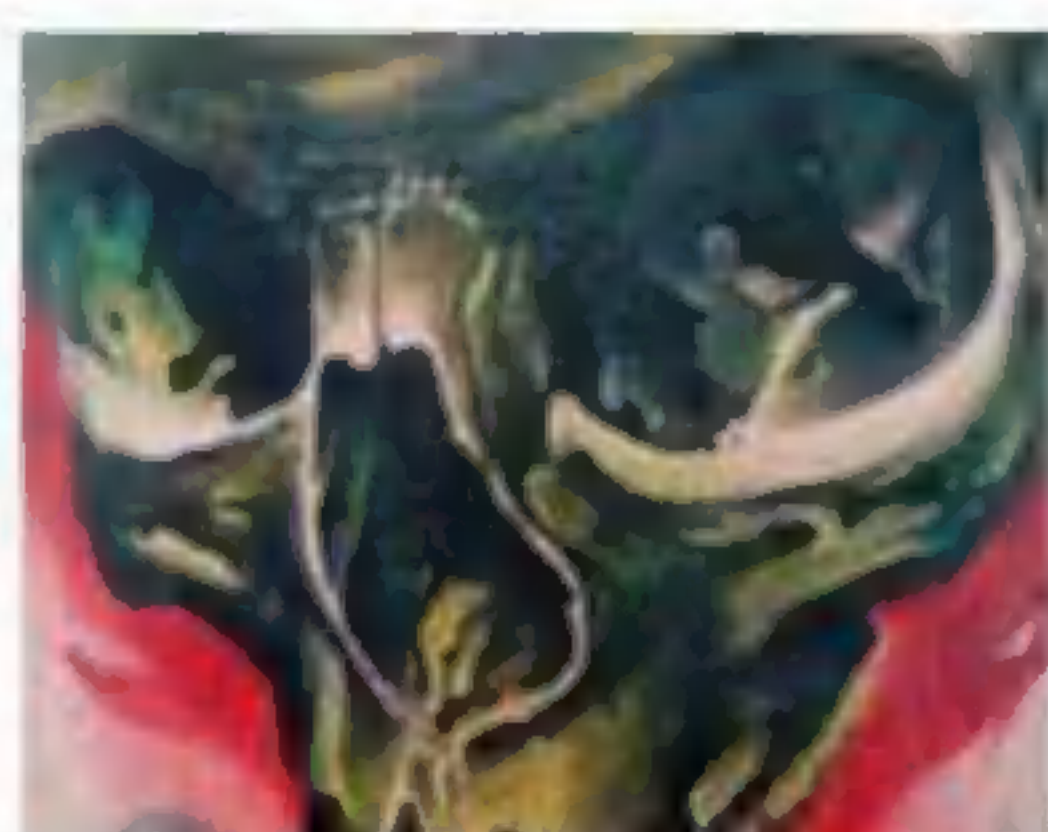
Movement, pixel and photographic effect Guy Aitchison-style  
By **David "dats" Racana**

**52 Agenda**  
INTERNATIONAL INK  
APPOINTMENTS**54 RITES OF PASSAGE**

Reportage from the Tattoo convention and Arts Festival in Melbourne

**56 HELSINKI**

11<sup>th</sup> appointment with tattoo in Finland  
By **David "dats" Racana**

**58 SYDNEY**

Third Australian tattoo & Body Art Expo  
By **Francesca De Angelis**

**60 COPENHAGEN**

Reportage from the Copenhagen Ink Fest  
By **Roy Micuzzi**

**66 TAS**

Respect for tradition in Japanese tattooing  
By **Jondix**

**74 Paintings**

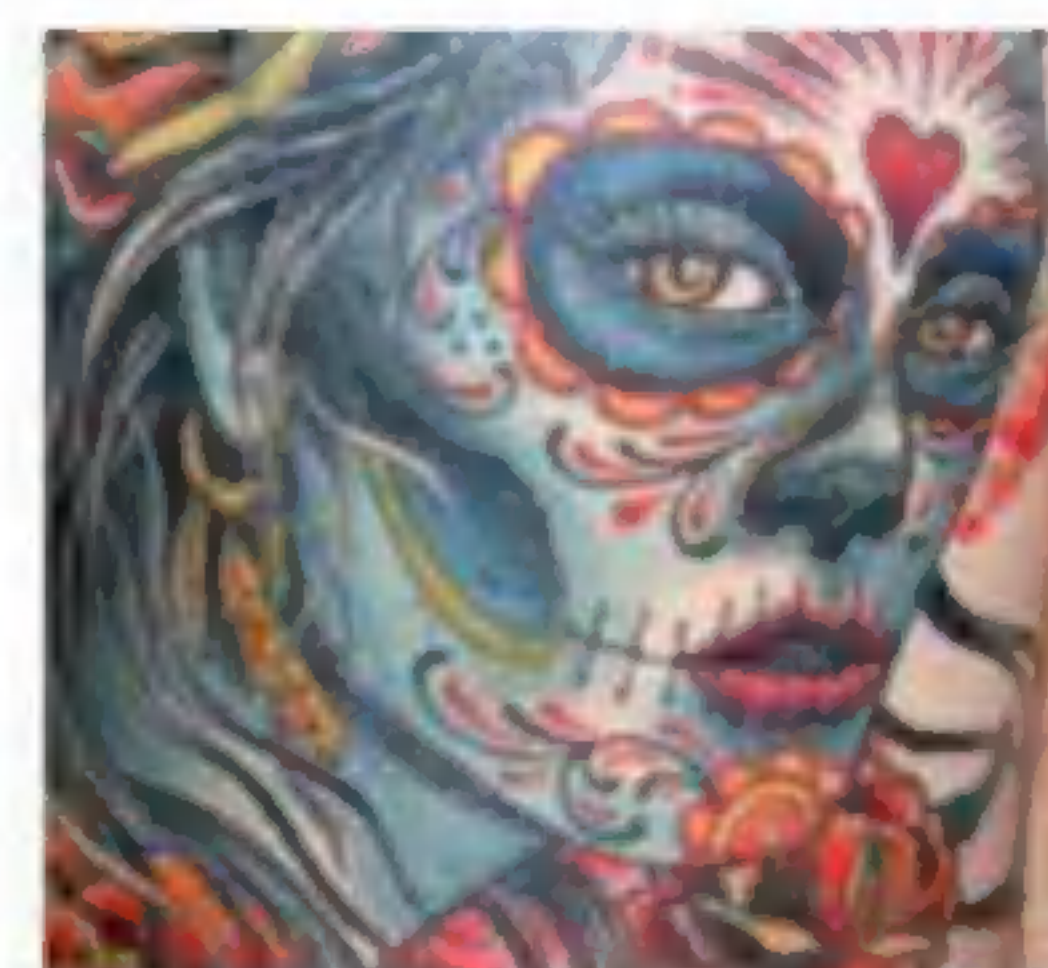
Pens and Needles: tattoo on display in London  
By **Margherita B.**

**78 Culture**

Capt. Don Leslie: one of the last representatives of tattooed circus artists  
By **Luisa Gnechi Ruscone**

**83 FLASH**

Leandro Denegri

**91 TATTOO COLLECTION****TATTOO life**

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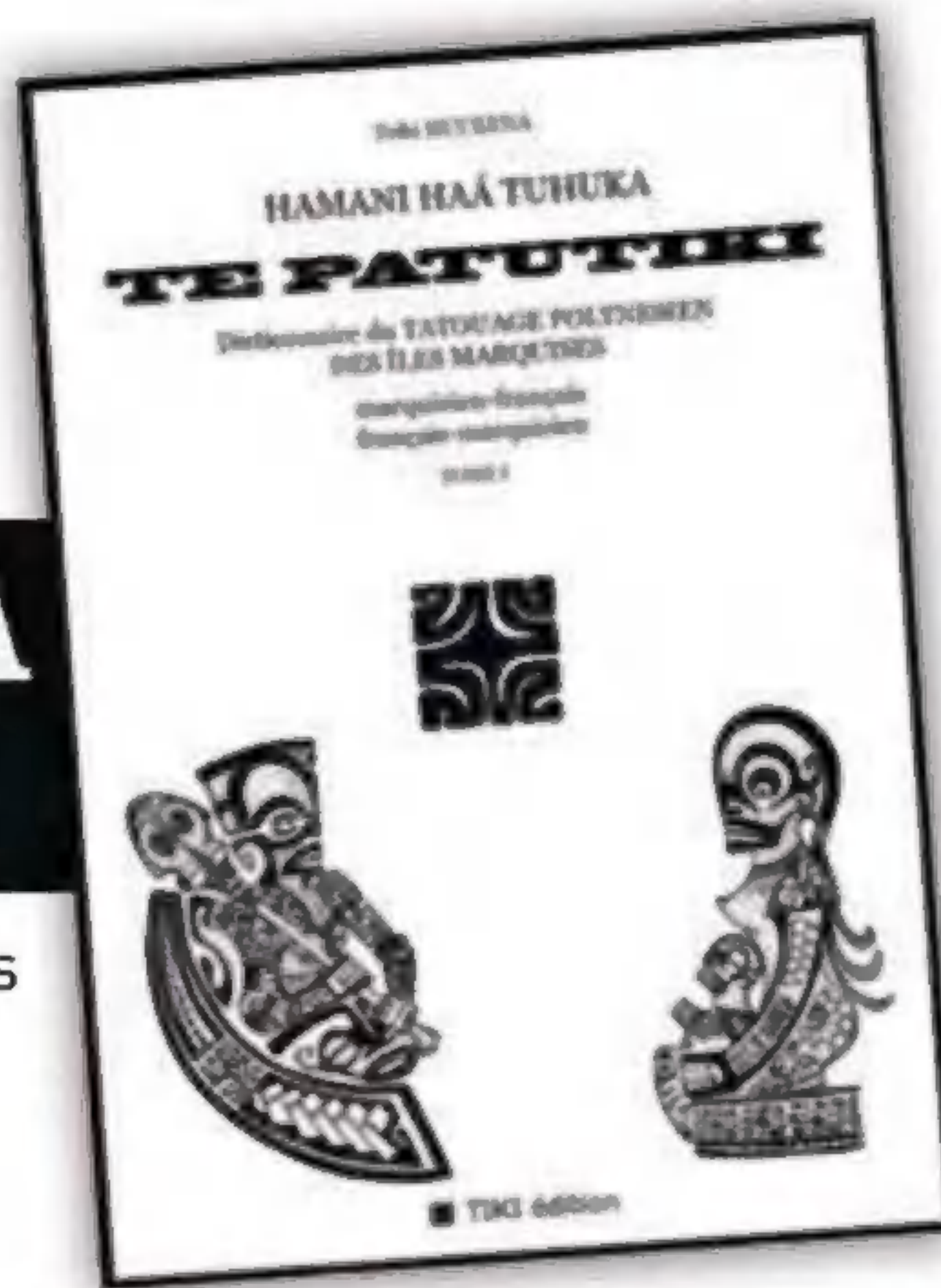
# TATTOOSPY

## HAMANI HAA' TUHUKA TE PATUTIKI

by **Teiki Huukena**



The prestigious bilingual dictionary **Hamani Haà Tuhuka Patituki Marquisien-Francais/Francais-Marquisien** is finally available. It is a useful tool to fully understand the meanings of the mysterious language of the Marquesas Islands and French Polynesia and its links with the so-called Polynesian tattoo (Tamoko maori, Tahitian Tatau, Samoan Peà, Marquesas Patutiki, etc). The master tattooist of the



Marquesas Islands **Teiki Huukena**

(full name Tedikitevaàmanihi Robert Huukena) put together this prestigious book of 234 pages, after years of research. If you want to buy it, the book costs 39 francs and it can be purchased at the Tiki Tattoo in Nîmes. Per informazioni: [www.tiki-tattoo.com](http://www.tiki-tattoo.com); [contact@tiki-tattoo.com](mailto:contact@tiki-tattoo.com)

## THE PERSISTENCE OF ART@BULLSEYE TATTOO

The exhibition Persistence Of Art will be held in the rooms of the Bullseye Tattoo in Staten Island (New York) promoted by the curator Liz Manzolini and the owner of the Bullseye, Victor Modaferrri. According to Manzolini the objective of The Persistence Of Art is to give famous tattoo artists the possibility to express and share their art through works that do not refer to the tattoo world. Some of the names on the list include: **Victor Modaferrri, Keith Ciaramello, Liz Manzolini, Tom Strom, John Swenney, Elvin Young, Boog, Steve Skelly, Tamara**



**Weiss, Johnny Thief, Chris Lowe, Alvin Chong, Jessica Brennan, Scottso, Mathew Lukesh, Sam Hinson, Julio Cesar Arroyo, Nick Caruso, Corry Norris, David Corden, Gunnar Gaylord** and others. For more

information check out the Facebook page of Bullseye (bullseyetattooostudio) or their official site at: [www.bullseyetattooshop.com](http://www.bullseyetattooshop.com).



Bullseye Studio, 282 New Dorp Lane, Staten Island, New York 10306  
tel: 718 979 4528

## TATTOO HANDBOOK 2 by Dimitri Hk, Steph D. and Benjo San

Would you like to get a nice tattoo on your hand? Well then we suggest flipping through this exhaustive **Tattoo Handbook 2** by **Dimitri Hk, Steph D. and Benjo San**. In the 153 pages of this nice book bound with a hardback cover, about 100 tattooists from around the world give us their personal interpretation of hand tattoos

thanks to original photos and sketches. A useful handbook to use when you are looking for the right tattoo and that all tattoo-addicted people should have in their personal libraries... got the message, right? Give me five then!

Info: [www.aroundthecaps.com](http://www.aroundthecaps.com)





## TATTOOSPY

# SUMMER JAMBOREE 2011

The new edition of the **Summer Jamboree**, that is "the hottest rockin' holiday on earth". will be held from **30 July to 7 August**, in the legendary location of Senigallia (AN). For nine days the clocks in Senigallia will beat at the rhythm of rock and roll, between music from the 40's and 50's, clothes and antique cars, many concerts and dance parties. The organizers confirmed that, for the third running year, there will be the "**Travel Ink Tattoos**", basically Greg Gregory's mobile tattoo studio set up in an amazing antique Airstream for tattoos, specifically created. As concerns the great music, after the exhibitions of Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck

Berry of the past editions, this year's edition will offer the show of "Mr. Personality" **Lloyd Price** (5 August), one of the greatest Elvis Presley fans. On August 3, **The Cadillacs** and **The Bobbettes**, two *quartets* born in Harlem in the 50's, one all male and the other all female, together on the same stage for an unforgettable night. The young hit of this edition will be **Si Cranstoun**, from Great Britain with a voice and body filled with verve, swing and soul and for those waiting for the **Hawaiian Party** on the beach (August 4) get ready to dance at the rhythm of **The Blues Willis**, Greg,

Max Paiella and the other great "Maranzano brothers". Others artists of the Jamboree include: **Smokestack Lightnin'**, **Red Wagons**,

**and the Moonlighters and Billy and the Crazy Dogs**. The summer Jamboree will also offer Burlesque Shows, the "trip to the castle" with music in the beautiful village of Corinaldo, a Dance Camp, the Rock and Roll Show and Ball with a big band composed of 22 elements ready to accompany the guest-stars and, obviously the Vintage Market open till late where you can find vintage objects and collector's items. Promoted and organized by the Cultural Association Summer Jamboree, the Summer Jamboree, created almost by chance, is today the biggest and most important festival of its kind in Europe, and one of the first 3 in the world, and it is promoted by the Municipality of Senigallia. Don't miss it!

Info: [www.summerjamboree.com](http://www.summerjamboree.com)

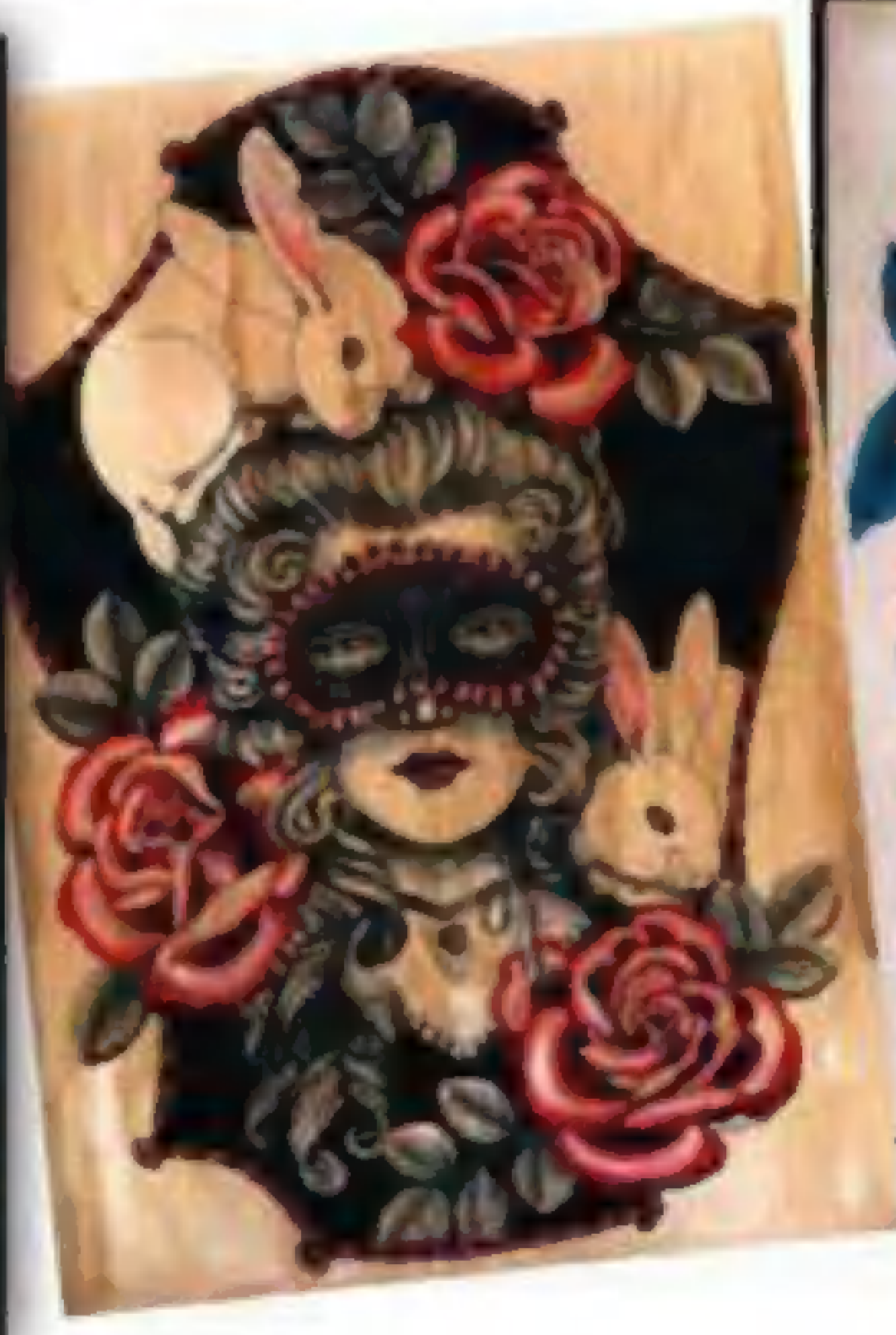


**Lil' Gizzelle, The Firebirds, Nico & the Rhythm Dudes, Johnny Trouble, Iris Romen, Luky and his Fried Chickens, Fake Youngsters, Laura B**



## Unplugged 2 by Various Artists

This is an important book. The book, elegantly bound with gold characters, **Unplugged 2** immediately brings us – as the subtitle says – to the "Art Show Extraordinaire" which was held in Brighton, at Phil Kayle's famous studio Magnum Opus in January 2009. Let's tell you a bit about it: the first Unplugged Art Show was organized at the Mekanik Strip in Antwerp (Belgium) in 2003, and



six years later the second edition was organized with over 100 tattoo artists who came together for the famous Brighton convention. They were asked to prepare personal pieces made not using the traditional tattoo machine, but made

with "the silence of pencils or markers". Now it's all here, for the pleasure of your eyes, do not miss it!

Info: [www.gentlemanstattoooflash.com](http://www.gentlemanstattoooflash.com); [www.magnumopustattoo.com](http://www.magnumopustattoo.com)



# SHOPPING

SUMMER TIME SHOPPING THAT WILL BRING A SUMMER BREEZE BETWEEN JUNE AND JULY ON YOUR TATTOOED BODIES. A POTPOURRI OF DIFFERENT STYLES FOR ALL TASTES: FROM THE CARAMEL-LIKE STYLE OF *TRASHY*, TO THE MOST GLAMOROUS DOLL AROUND BY *TARINA TARANTINO*, WITHOUT FORGETTING TO BUY THOSE CREEPY LITTLE *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS* ITEMS, THE BIKER STYLE OF *HARLEY DAVIDSON*, THE CALIFORNIA SUN OF *SANTA CRUZ*, THE IRREVERENT *PUNK ROSE* AND THE TRIBUTE TO THE ROYAL COUPLE BY *ELVINE*. AND TATTOO BECOMES A T-SHIRT FOR BASTARD WITH THE NEW LINE *MILANO CITY INK*.

## Between cherries and corsets

Trashy.com is an online site where you can find all the most curious things dedicated to the art of female seduction. Masks, corsets and hats, not to mention the new shoe collection, fun and candy-sweet, like real pin-ups! [www.trashy.com](http://www.trashy.com)



## Magic Barbie

**TARINA  
TARANTINO**  
HANDMADE IN THE U.S.A.

Even Tarina Tarantino gave her own interpretation of the famous dolls. Here are the latest creations: rings, bracelets, necklaces and ear-rings. Instead of the elegant 700-style lady, Barbie is now the new image of cameos. [www.tarinatarantino.com](http://www.tarinatarantino.com)



## Congratulation!

We want to honor the "wedding of the century" too, presenting the brand Elvine with its T-shirt dedicated to the royal couple! For those of you who have a good sense of humour, this is a must... [www.elvine.se](http://www.elvine.se)



## Creepy Edward

For all those who love gothic and for those who match dark with the "strange" creatures that recall Edward Scissorhands, well this is the right site. Here is the "devil" sweatshirt with tail and devil face on the heart. Of course black and sleeves with zippers to adapt them to all needs. [www.scissorhandsclothing.com](http://www.scissorhandsclothing.com)





# wildcat



The Wildcat Collection Ltd, 6 Gardner St, Brighton, BN1 1UP, UK  
Tel: +44(0)1273 323758 Fax: +44(0)1273 278103  
Email: info@wildcat.co.uk Web: www.wildcat.co.uk





## punk style



A brand dedicated to those who want to wear the punk style from head to toe. The American Punk Rose takes inspiration from the world of music, art without neglecting fashion, creating a collection that completely breaks away from traditional shoes thanks to a combination of colors and explosive prints.  
www.punkrose.com



## Californian lifestyle



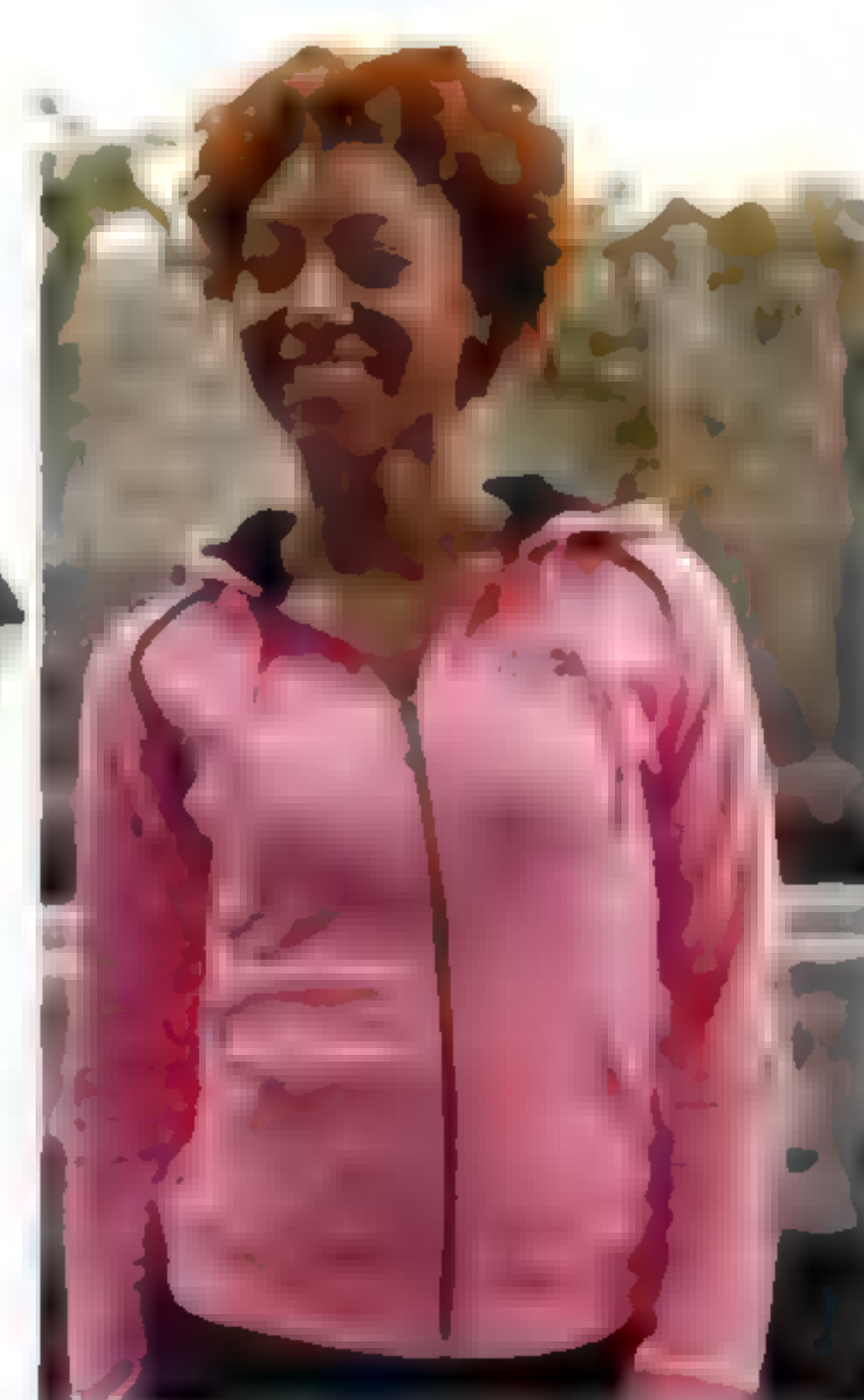
For those who are looking for a California-style surfer look the right brand is Santa Cruz. Born in the 70's it was able to develop in the "board" sport sector following the coolest iconographic trend of the moment. So here is a selection of men's bathing-suits with a tattoo touch. Pray for me baby!  
www.santacruz.eu.com



## SHOPPING



## MOTORBIKE STYLE



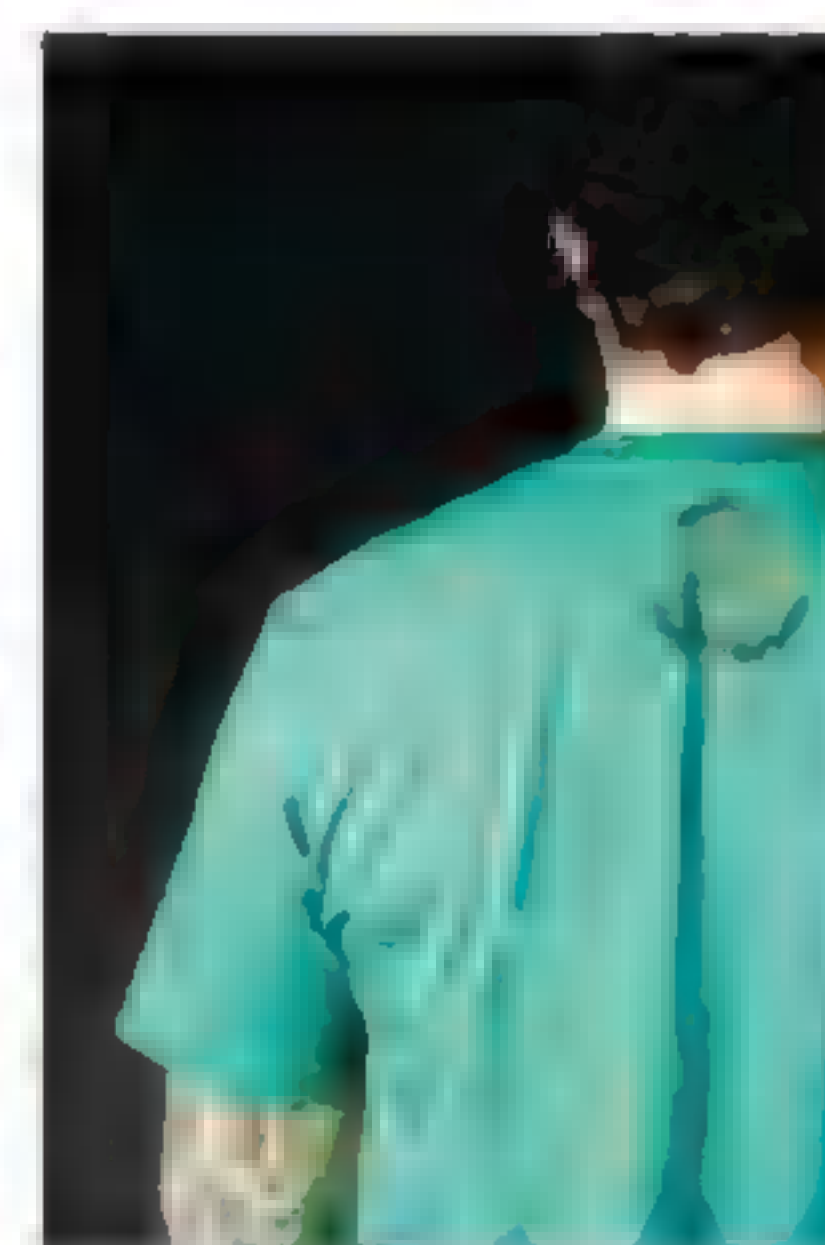
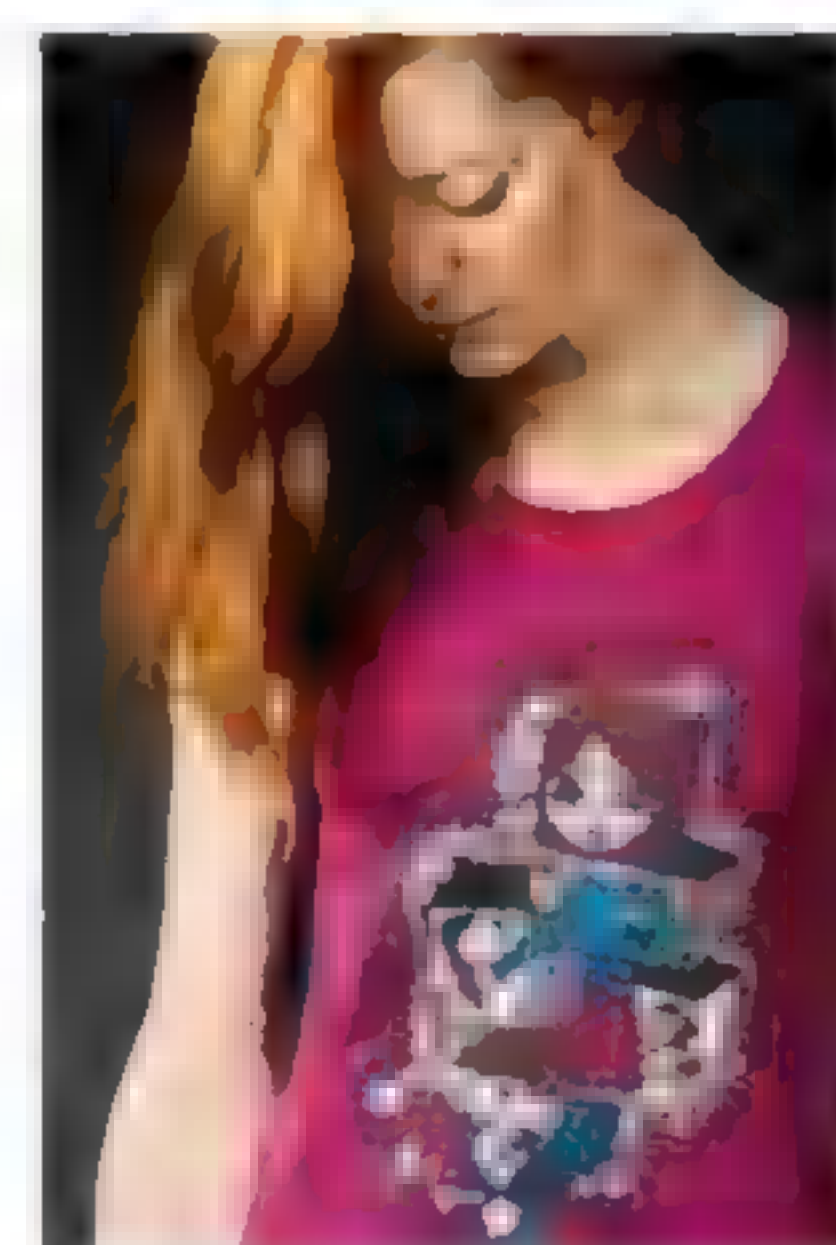
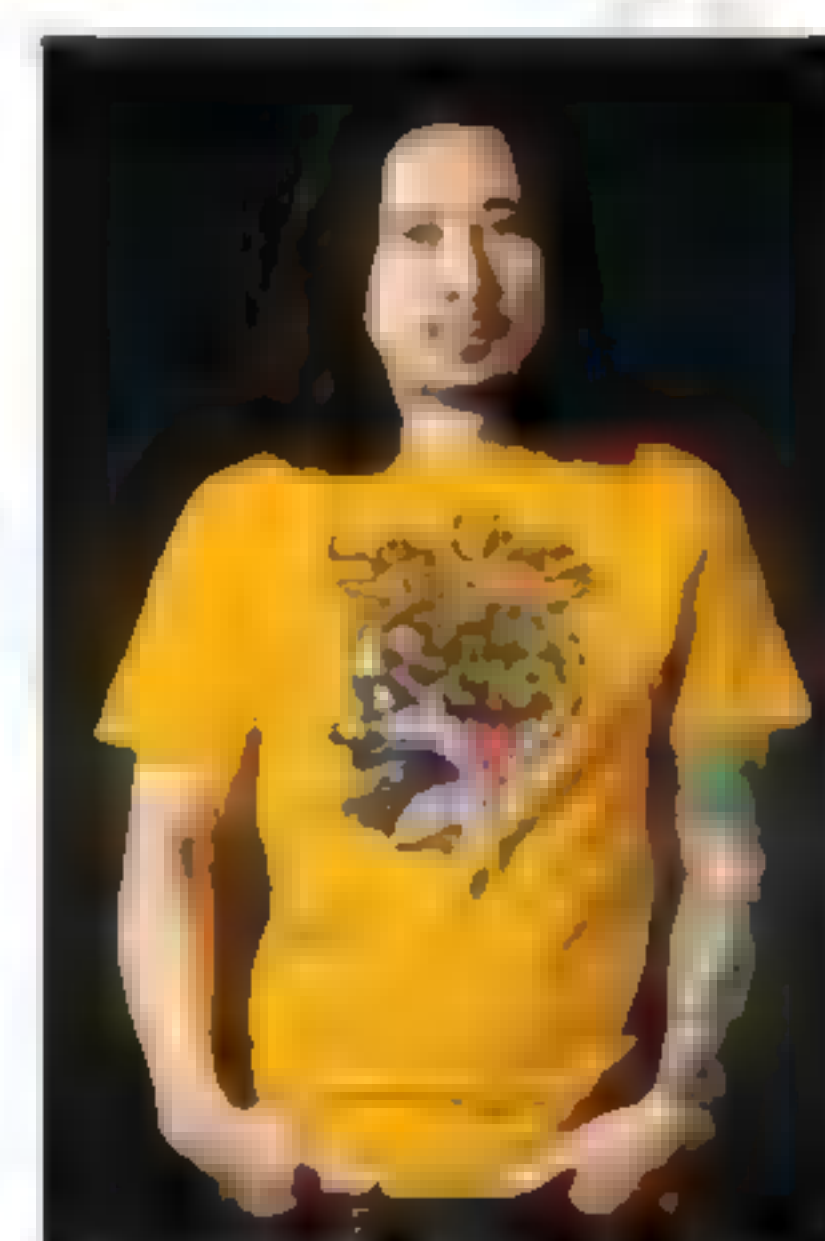
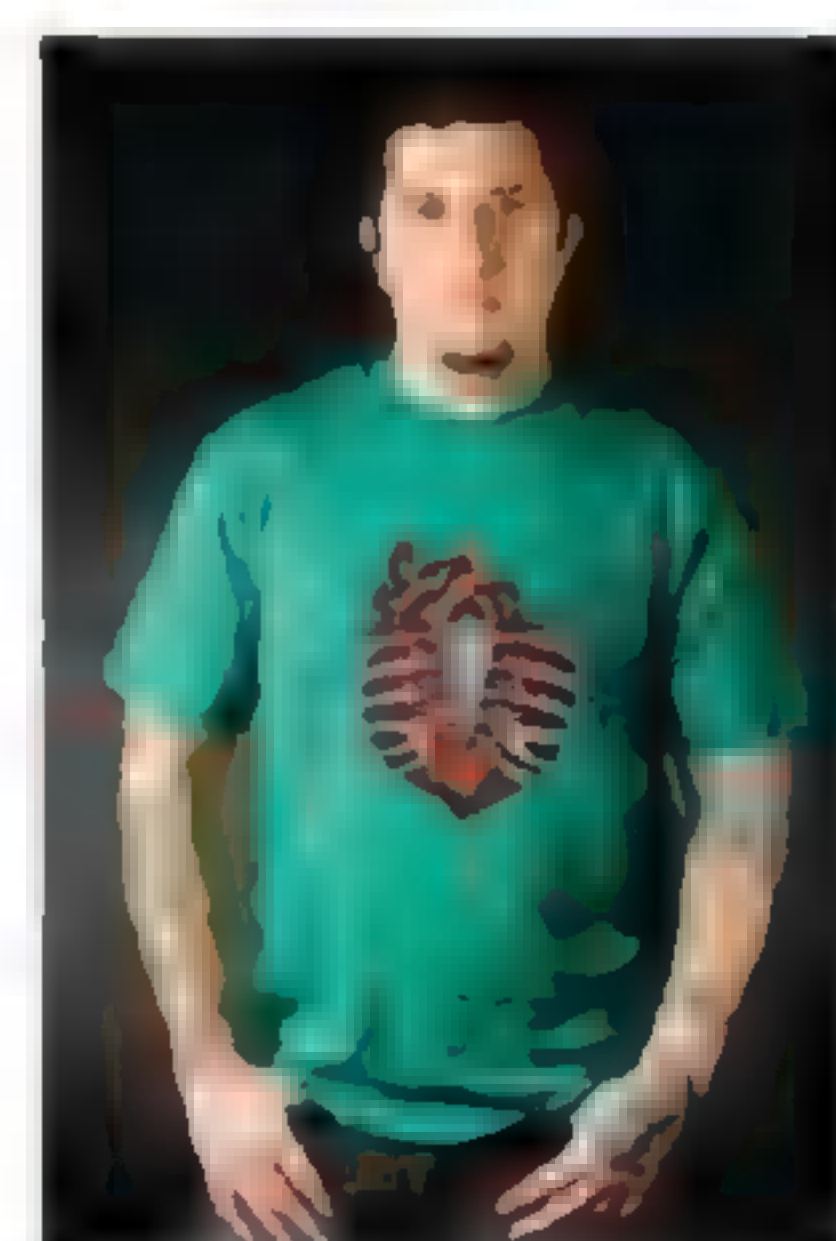
Amazing femininity for the Pink Label collection, proposed by Harley Davidson for her in lovely new pink hues. For him the new solutions with a slim fit



cut, particularly up-to-date and young-looking. Mostly dark colors and vintage look. The Pink & Black label Collection are available all year at Harley-Davidson shops.  
www.harley-davidson.it

## Milano City Ink ON T-SHIRTS

**bastard**



The famous street brand Bastard launches the new T-shirt production signed by the three famous tattoo artists of the tattoo shop/gallery Milano City Ink (Milan, Italy). Amanda's dolls, her signature image and mark, the traditional heart reinterpreted by Luca Natalini and a fantastic 'Say cheese' by the Japanese Koji are the first creations on sale online at:  
www.bastard.it/



MUSIC

MAMA  
FESTIVALROCK  
PRESENT

TEXT BY SIMONE SACCO

# HIGH VOLTAGE FESTIVAL 2011

YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER ROCK-PARTY COMIN'



www.highvoltagefestival.com - facebook: high voltage festival

READY TO SPEND A GREAT WEEKEND IN THE PLEASANT ATMOSPHERE OF A LONDON PARK, WAITING TO LISTEN TO THE BEST OF METAL, HARD ROCK, PROGRESSIVE, BLUES, PSYCHEDELIC, DOOM, ETC.? WELL THEN MAKE SURE YOU KEEP SATURDAY 23 AND SUNDAY 24 FREE AND GET A HOLD

OF THE TICKETS FOR THE SECOND EDITION OF THE HIGH VOLTAGE FESTIVAL! AMONG THE VARIOUS ADDITIONAL EVENTS THERE WILL BE SOME MOMENTS DEDICATED TO THE NEXT INTERNATIONAL LONDON TATTOO CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER...

**M**usic, tattoos and summer: is there maybe a better combination? Probably no, and we will have the final proof of this in a few weeks when the second edition of the **High Voltage Festival** will be held in the beautiful **Victoria Park** in London. This music packed event was a big hit last year with the concert-headliners of Emerson, Lake

& Palmer (40 year reunion for the band and only date in 2010) and ZZ Top, and soon will double the status with two more days during which you can listen to the best of metal, progressive and hard-rock music divided onto three stages (Main Stage, Prog Stage and Hammer Stage). Basically there is something for all generations and types of people. So let's take a look at the cast for the first day, Saturday 23 July. The Hammer Stage will be rocking with

## HIGH VOLTAGE

SATURDAY 23 &amp; SUNDAY 24 JULY 2011

MAIN STAGE

Judas Priest

DREAM THEATER

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVES

BLACK COUNTRY COMEBACK

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVES

PROG STAGE

JETHRO TULL

UK FESTIVAL EXCLUSIVES

SPOCK'S BEARD

CARAVAN MOSTLY AUTUMN

PALLAS THE END

MORE ACTS TO BE ANNOUNCED

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Custom built by rock fans, for rock fans

Attica Rage, Primitai, Ravens Creed, Grand Magus and Evile before the gran finale of the dark doomster **Electric Wizard**, who just released their powerful album *Black Masses*. The line-up included the bass player-tattoo artist **Tas** (when he is free from his music you will be sure to find him working at Into You Tattoo in London). The Prog Stage, on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, will be smashing with the Von Hertzen Brothers, Amplifier, Caravan, the sad Anathema, Neal Morse (back playing solo and free from Transatlantic) and the headliners **John Lee's Barclay James Harvest** who – as the great history of rock taught us – were among the first representatives of British progressive yet never neglecting that purely psychedelic atmosphere that led to the production of amazing albums such as *Barclay James Harvest* of 1970 and *Everyone Is Everybody Else* of 1974. The Main Stage will be jamming with Skin, Rival Sons, **Queensrÿche** (during their only appearance for 2011 in a British festival), the Irish **Thin Lizzy**, the famous **Slash** with the powerful voice of Myles Kennedy (Alter Bridge) and **Judas Priest** who even without the legendary guitarist K.K. Downing will close the first day of the High Voltage festival with two clear objectives in mind: honor their "UK Festival Exclusive" and say goodbye to their many fans because – rumors have it – that this should be the last tour for the legendary band from Birmingham.





Derek Sherinian and Jason Bonham). And the highly awaited for show of **Dream Theater** will close the High Voltage festival. They will finally put themselves to the test after the rough months of 2010 after the drummer-band founder Mike Portnoy left. This is of course just the music part. But what



After wiping the tears for the (probable) break-up of Rob Halford and friends, let's take a look at the schedule for Sunday 24 starting as usual from the Hammer Stage. There will be Furyon, Gentlemens Pistols, Black

Spiders and the awaited for **Neurosis** who will rock the scene with their unique dose of post-metal and atmospheric-hardcore. Even the Prog Stage has a rich bill where Pallas, The Enid, Curved Air, Mostly Autumn and the neo-progster **Spock's Beard** (last year's album *X* is simply beautiful) will entertain the audience until the legendary **Jethro Tull** hit the stage. They are also the protagonists of a "UK Exclusive" supported by the amazing charisma of Ian Anderson. The Main Stage is up to the beat too with Saint Jude, Michael Schenker (without Group), **Thunder** (another "UK Festival Exclusive" of the day) and **Black Country Communion** (the super-band formed by Glenn Hughes, Joe Bonamassa,

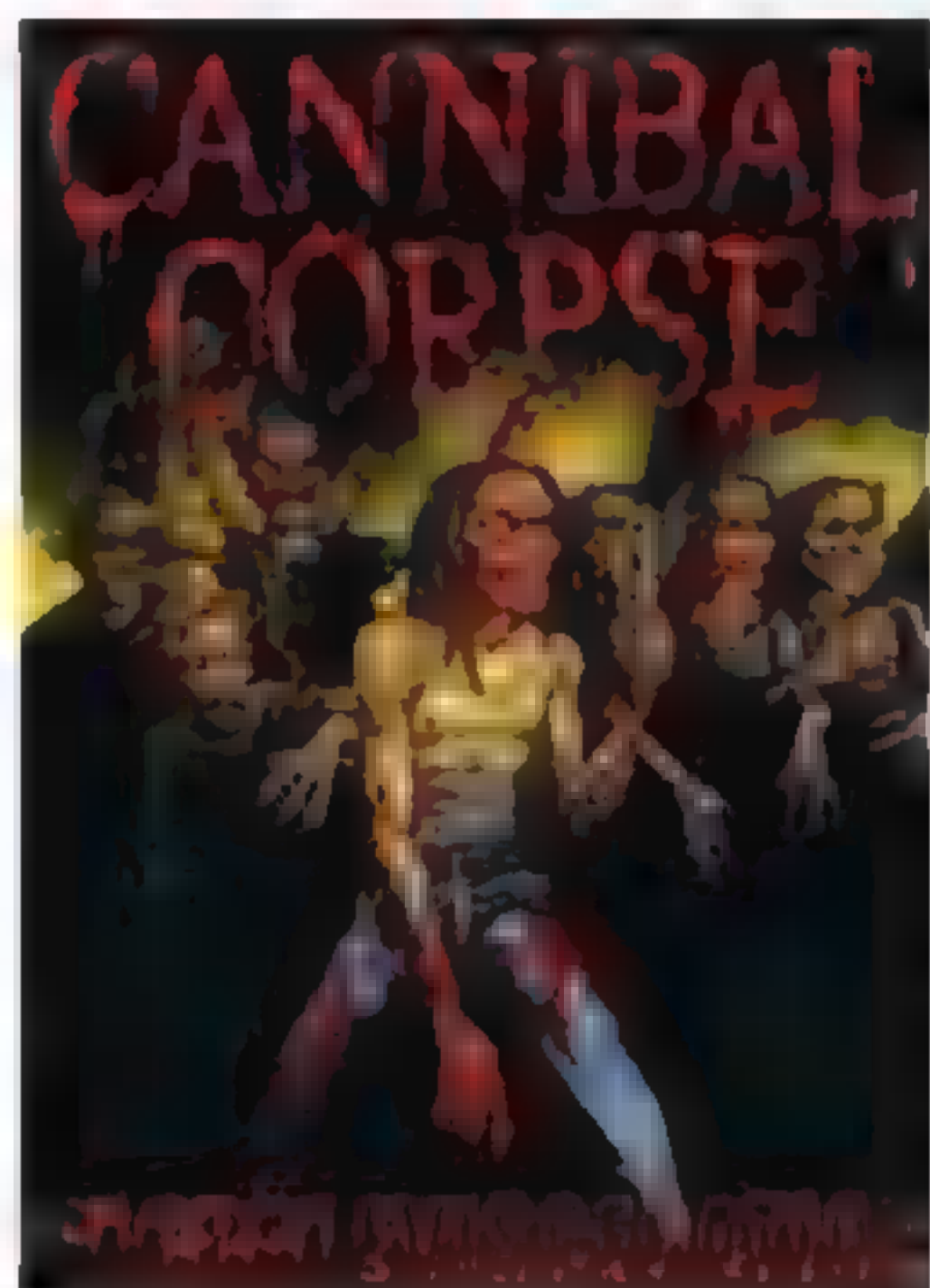
would a rock festival be without the essential and necessary presence of tattoos? And in this case we are not talking about those on the skin of the visitors or musicians taking part in the festival (Rob Halford, Slash, Mike Stone of Queensrÿche, the guys of Neurosis and Tas of Electric Wizard, just to mention a few names, are really into tattoos...) but of a real tent set up in the park during the festival where you can get all the info on the next **International London Tattoo Convention**, to be held from 23 to 25 September in the usual Tobacco Dock location. You can also visit an all-female photographic exhibition dedicated to "Women and Tattoos", a solo exhibit by **Vince Ray** (he plays with the wild **Vince Ray & The Boneshakers** and he is a master at decorating California hot rods) and, *last but not least*, you can meet the entire staff of **East Side Tattoo**, London, of Bethnal Green Road (for info: [www.e2tat2.com](http://www.e2tat2.com)). **Stephen** and **Rafa** will be tattooing on site for the entire weekend offering traditional, Japanese and realistic style tattoos. What can we say: there is always a way to be inspired by a beautiful song and want to get tattooed right away. Even during a "high voltage" festival that is simply... a must. You can't miss it!





## CANNIBAL CORPSE

'GLOBAL EVISCERATION'  
(METAL BLADE)



Do you want to try the incredible sound of your brand new plasma TV screen? Well then, slide in this fantastic *Global Evisceration* by Cannibal Corpse into your DVD player immediately and let yourself be captured by two amazing shows (Denver and Albuquerque) recorded during the long world tour as supporting band for *Evisceration Plague*. George "Corpsegrinder" Fisher and team can be seen at the max of

their brutal-death power. The bone-crushing tracks are lightened up by the several "backstage" scenes (funny for example the one in which the five from Buffalo meet a surprised reverend Jesse Jackson at the Brussels airport!) the DVD is filled with. Is this all? No, because *Global Evisceration* also comes in an elegant "deluxe edition" with gore comics and a bonus CD. For all the true extreme fans out there!

## SIXX:AM

'THIS IS GONNA HURT'  
(ELEVEN SEVEN MUSIC)



New, highly awaited for return on stage for the legendary bass player of Mötley Crüe and ex boyfriend of Kat Von D, the wild Nikki Sixx. The same Sixx that, along with his musical partner DJ Ashba, published the second chapter of the melodic Sixx:A.M. At the same time the shocking book

*This Is Gonna Hurt*, was released in bookshops. This is the second book published after four years from the first toxic/literary stories *The Heroin Diaries*, a bestseller in the States. The eleven songs of the album, should be a soundtrack for the topics contained in the book, but they also work on their own thanks to a rock-electronic sound that Nikki could never use in his band. But he uses these sounds freely in this CD moving skillfully between the 80's, taking inspiration from Rob Zombie but used in a more pop key (*Live Forever*), masked tributes to Muse (listen to the title track...) a true arena sing-a-long (the amazing *Lies Of The Beautiful People* and *Are You With Me*). Once again the touch of a true master!

## THE STREETS

'COMPUTERS AND BLUES'  
(WARNER BROS)



So the genius Mike Skinner decided to say good-bye to us after five albums with The Streets, interrupting his activity as the most envied MC/producer/in the UK of the third millennium. Is it true? Well, Skinner talks about wanting to start a solo film career but the main quality of the precious *Computers and*

*Blues* is heavy. After the (forced?) escape in the nature of *Everything Is Borrowed*, in fact, The Streets is back, as concerns "credibility", running after black, rock and electronic sounds with a freshness that (still) recalls *Original Pirate Material*, his masterpiece of 2002. He is supported by the screamer of The Music, Robert Harvey, as in *Going Through Hell*, *Soldiers* and *We Can Never Be Friends* besides the singer-songwriter Clare Maguire, main character of *Lock The Locks*. Not to mention the jewel - very early 90's and certainly Soul II Soul - which is called *Trust Me*. Well, if it is a true farewell, he did it with a bang...

## TRAVIS BARKER

'GIVE THE DRUMMER SOME'  
(INTERSCOPE RECORDS)



We waited for him faithfully and finally here he is: *Give The Drummer Some* is Travis Barker's first solo album, super tattooed drummer of Blink 182. In the past years Travis, given his break from his main band, told us about his interest in black music and clubbing, first of all through a remix series he produced for artists of the

hip hop world including the one for The Game *Dope Boys* and the one for Soulja Boys *Crank That* and through his performances together with DJ AM (R.I.P.). this brief outline was necessary to understand the work carried for this *GTDS*, an album in which Barker doesn't just play a series of complicated drum fills, but "simply" tries to create the right groove and breaks needed to reinforce the many MC's present in the CD. In my opinion, the best pieces are those with the participation of Busta Rhymes, Cypress Hill and Corey Taylor of Slipknot/Stone Sour (only heavy rock track). All in all an album you can easily enjoy, it won't surprise the more technical drummers, but it will make your head spin...and your legs!

(Andrea "Rock" Toselli/Virgin Radio)



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WHO'S WHO

# HIROSHI HIRAKAWA WHEN XYLOGRAPHY BECOMES ART

TEXT BY TAKAHIRO "HORITAKA" KITAMURA

[www.hiroshihirakawa.com](http://www.hiroshihirakawa.com)

[www.threetidestattoo.com](http://www.threetidestattoo.com)

HIROSHI HIRAKAWA HAS QUICKLY GAINED NOTORIETY IN THE TATTOO WORLD FOR HIS PAINTINGS. HIS WORK IS APPRECIATED FOR ONE SIMPLE REASON; IT IS AMAZING. REMINISCENT OF THE WOODBLOCK PRINT STYLE AND WITH A CONSCIOUS NOD TO MASTER ARTIST MASAMI TERAOKA, HIROSHI HIRAKAWA HAS INFUSED TATTOO IMAGERY

AND IDEOLOGY INTO HIS RECENT WORKS. HE IS AN AVID TATTOO COLLECTOR AND THIS YEAR HAS JOINED THE ELITE THREE TIDES TATTOO CREW TO LEARN THE CRAFT OF TATTOOING. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR HIS TATTOOING IN THE NEAR FUTURE BUT REST ASSURED THAT HE WILL NOT BE SLOWING DOWN ON PAINTING EITHER!!



**L**ET'S START WITH YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY, WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I come from Akita prefecture, Akita city. It's a quiet place, the kind of place where there is one tattoo shop, one place for live bands... kind of a sleepy place. My parents have a business but I guess it doesn't really have anything to do with what I am doing now. I am the second oldest of four siblings.

**SO IN A TOWN LIKE THAT, ESPECIALLY IN JAPAN, WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF TATTOOING?**

I guess it kind of had an outlaw image, probably because of the Yakuza. When I was 16, I started going to shows and I saw people with tattoos. People that weren't Yakuza with Japanese style tattoos and I thought it was cool, real cool.

**AT WHAT POINT DID YOU GET TATTOOED?**

I wanted tattoos at that point

but the tattooers in Akita prefecture wouldn't tattoo me at 16, they said I had to wait till I was 18. So I went to Tokyo to get my first tattoo. It was my first time going to Tokyo. I had a friend living there and he was also 16 and had found a place that would tattoo us. I really didn't know much about any of it at that time, just that I wanted to be tattooed!

**WHAT DID YOU GET TATTOOED?**  
A dragon, we outlined it on my arm.

**THAT'S A GREAT STORY, TRAVELING TO THE BIG CITY FOR THE FIRST TIME TO GET YOUR FIRST TATTOO! LET'S BACKTRACK A BIT, DO YOU HAVE AN ART BACKGROUND?**

When I was in elementary school I was drawing anime and manga characters. I guess I liked drawing for a long time. I didn't take classes or have training but I practiced and I liked to draw. When I got into tattoos, I started drawing tattoo type things.

**HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT TATTOO TYPE DRAWINGS WERE? WHAT WAS YOUR POINT OF REFERENCE?**

Tattoo Burst had just come out, so that was some reference. I started getting









**BUT THE PAINTINGS YOU ARE MOST KNOWN FOR AREN'T EXACTLY TATTOO DESIGNS, HOW DID THIS STYLE COME ABOUT?**

Well, at the shop they had a Masami Teraoka book. I was moved and it spoke to me. Initially I really liked woodblock prints and wanted to make art like that. When I saw Teraoka's work, I felt that I wanted to be like him. At first, I wanted to make original woodblock print style art and then, when I saw his work, I wanted to do what would be considered a "continuation" of his work. I respect him very much. His work incorporates very original and modern elements while retaining an old look and I love that. For example, he was very famous for incorporating condoms in his work and recently I did a series featuring cell phones.

**HIS WORK ALSO HAD A VERY POLITICAL LEANING, DOES THIS AFFECT YOUR WORK?**

I don't have a political agenda, I just love Teraoka's work.

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THIS, BUT WHAT TYPE OF MATERIALS DO YOU USE? CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROCESS?**

I use Japanese nihonga watercolor paints and Arches paper. Usually the picture is in my head, it's finished there. I generally go straight to paper, without sketches.

**IS THE CHALLENGE IN THE FORMATION OF THE IDEA OR IN PUTTING IT TO PAPER?**

I think making the picture in my head is the difficult part. Sometimes it just doesn't come to you.

**ARE THERE THINGS THAT PUT YOU IN A CREATIVE MODE?**

I love old woodblock prints, Teraoka's work, artwork from Edo period, like antiques, pottery, things like that.

**YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING PAINTINGS THAT I THINK ARE VERY REMINISCENT OF JAPANESE WOODBLOCK PRINTS, WHY DO YOU THINK THESE IMAGES ARE RESONATING SO WELL WITH THE TATTOO COMMUNITY?**

tattooed at 18 years old at Cotton Pickin Tattoo. That was the shop in Akita and Hiroyuki was the man. He started tattooing me and would show me drawings. I was mesmerized. When I was 19, I heard about the Tokyo Tattoo Convention and went to Ebisu to check it out. It was at this time that I first had the thought of becoming a tattoo artist. I continued to get tattooed and hang around the shop.



Well, I think one reason is that I do study western art and American traditional tattoos. And I try to mix that in a manner that retains the fundamental Japanese aesthetic.

**I THINK YOSHITOSHI DID THE SAME AND LOOKING AT YOUR HANDS, YOU DEFINITELY LIKE BOTH STYLES OF TATTOOING. YOU HAVE BIRDS AND SCRIPT FROM CHAD KOEPLINGER AND A DRAGON AND SNAKE FROM ICHIBAY! WHERE ARE YOU AS FAR AS TATTOOING?**

I am starting from the beginning at Three Tides Tattoo. With tattooing,

I want to do Japanese style but I also want to do work that fits the description you just made of my paintings. I want to keep the Japanese aesthetic but infuse more modern and western elements.

**EVEN AS YOU START TATTOOING, WILL YOU CONTINUE TO PRODUCE YOUR ART?**

Of course!

**GOOD!! WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING MORE OF IT IN THE FUTURE AS WELL AS YOUR TATTOOING**

Yes, I love creating art, painting and tattoos, and I hope that my work speaks to people. I love the feeling when someone is happy because of my work.







Paul D. Hump, Guru Tattoo, San Diego, USA



# ARTIST



# TATTOO CONVENTION & MUSIC FESTIVAL 2011

March, 4/5/6 2011, OC Fairgrounds

CONVENTION



Champ, 454 Tattoo, Encinitas, USA



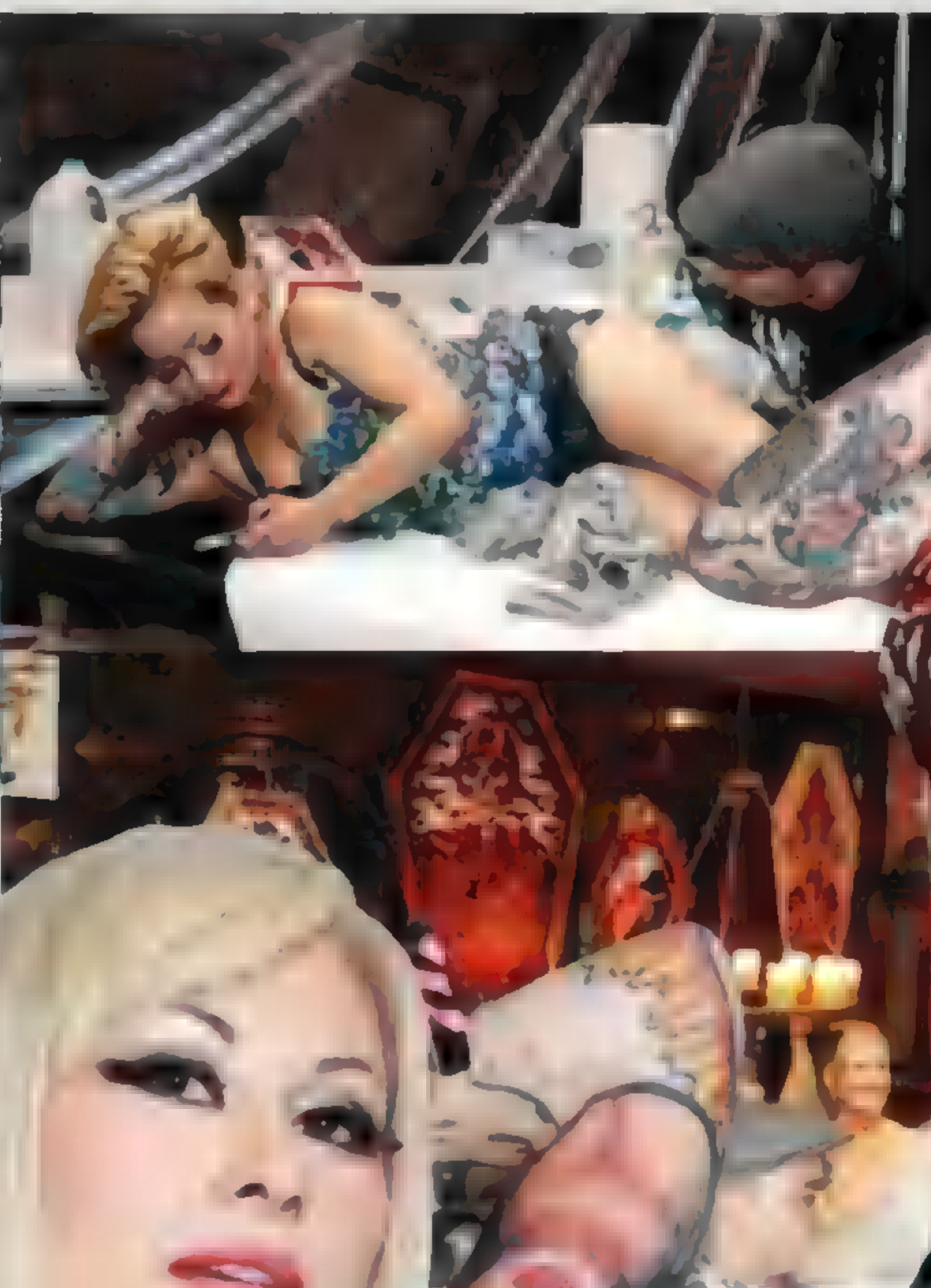
## CONVENTION

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY SUSANA VICTORIA (WWW.VESTIGEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

Interviews by Sierra Rose

WE COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER THROUGH OUR ART, AND THE WORLD CANNOT HELP BUT STOP AND STARE. BE IT LIVES ON SKIN OR ON A CANVAS, ART CAPTIVATES US EVEN IF WE HAVE SEEN MILLIONS. LIVE MUSIC EVOKES PASSION AND EXCITEMENT- SEEING AN ARTIST AT WORK IS ALWAYS CAPTIVATING. THAT'S WHAT KEEPS US COMING BACK. TATTOO CONVENTIONS ARE A PLACE TO EXPERIENCE ART IN THE MAKING AND BECOME A PART OF THE COLLAGE OF BEAUTY THAT SHAPES THIS COMMUNITY INTO AN EXTRAORDINARY FORCE...

# MUSINK TATTOO CONVENTION & MUSIC FESTIVAL 2011



**H**ERE ARE SOME SENTIMENTS FROM TWO PASSIONATE VENDORS.

"I'm printing shirts right here, right now. It's my way of tattooing-but on a t-shirt." (Jason Welsher from *To Die For Clothing*)

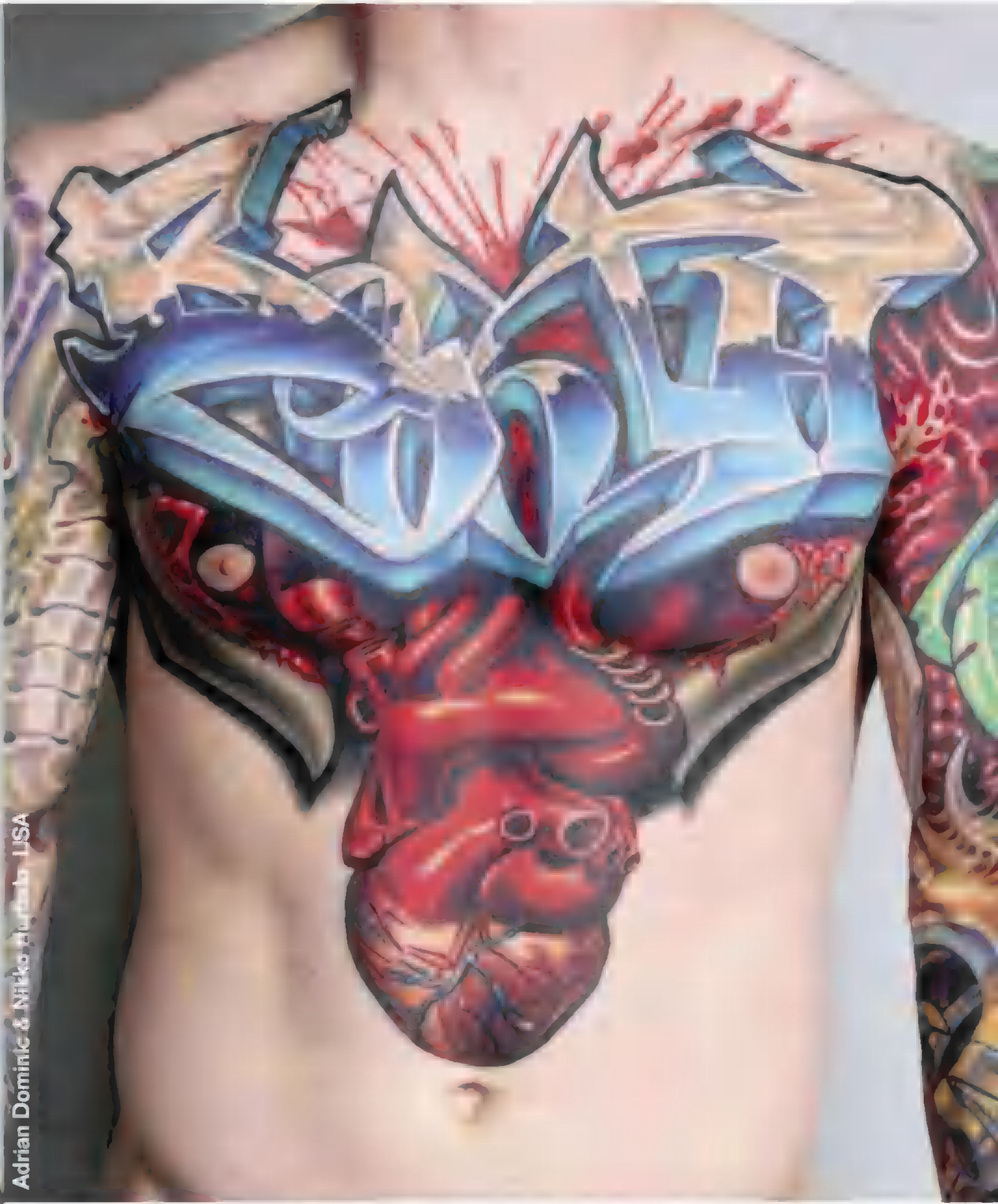
"I have a message to get out, so I do all the designs." (Chris Chance from *In His Name Clothing*)

Through the magnificent work of Robert Hernandez, this year's Musink artwork looks as awesome as every year thus far. In attendance are always the best of the best, as Southern California is home to amazing tattoo artists like Bob Roberts, Jack Rudy, Corey Miller, and Juan Puente. Some only came for a brief moment, like Mark Mahoney and Rick Walters, but it's always a





Mike Dominick, MD 14825, USA



Adrian Dominick & Nikko Hurlbut, USA



Artist unknown



Bob Emel, Mphd, Equestrian, USA



## CONVENTION

# MAJESTY TATTOO CONVENTION & MUSIC FESTIVAL 2011



Mike Devries & Cecil Potter



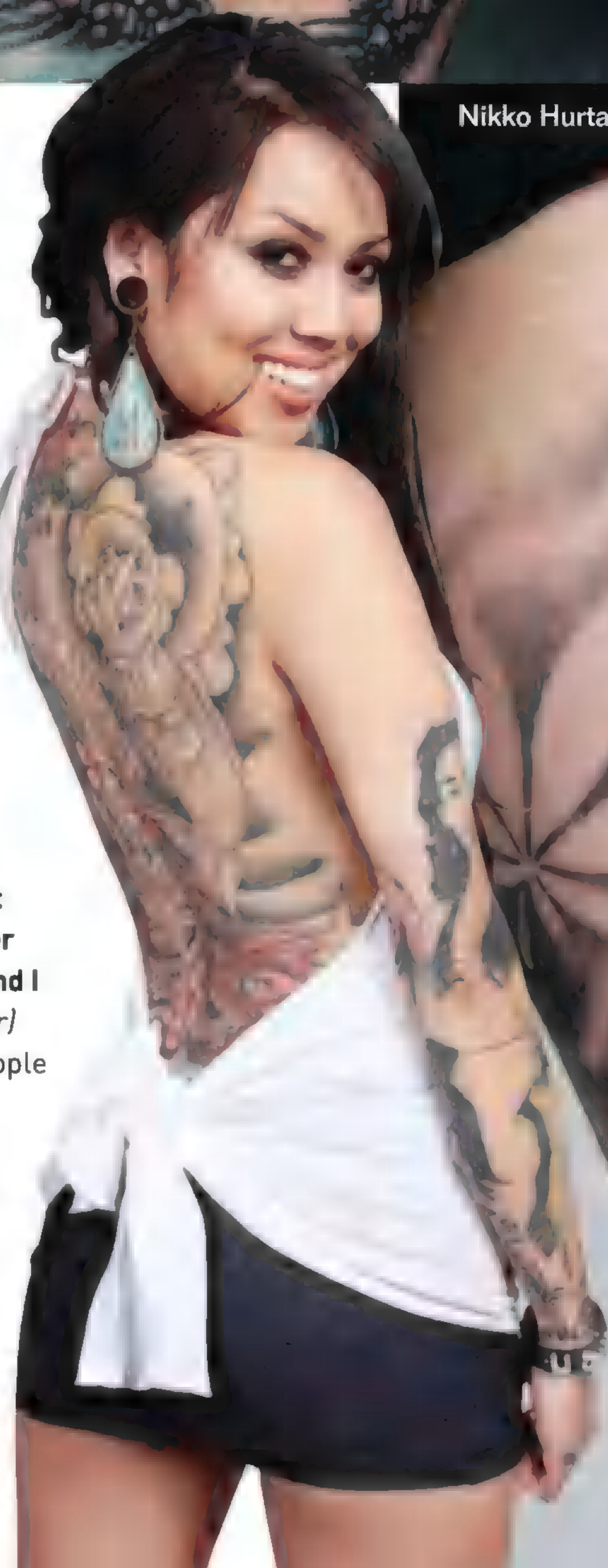
Nikko Hurtado, Black Anchor Collective, USA

special treat to pay homage to the best of the industry as guests at events such as this. Horiyasa and Horien from Black Eyes Tattoo in Yokosuka, Japan worked away the weekend, and their gorgeous pieces were a treat for all to see. Of course Kim Saigh and Shawn Barber from Memoir tattoo were booked solid, but never too busy to catch up with their fellow tattooers.

**"There are a lot of good artists here from all over the world. There's also a lot of fresh talent."**  
(Jason Welsher)

**"It's a local convention for me, so it makes sense to be here. The caliber of artists and bands is high here, and I see a lot of friends."** (Shawn Barber)  
Music usually isn't what draws people to tattoo conventions. Bill Hardie, one of the masterminds behind the event, had a plan in mind from day one.

**"We book bands the artists actually want to see."** (Bill Hardie)



Nikko Hurtado, Black Anchor Collective, USA







Carlos Torres, Ink Fiend Art, Alhambra, USA



Nikko Hurtado, Black Anchor Collective, USA

This year's Musink hired on ten different DJ's who played everything from dub-step to meringue (okay, maybe it was just one meringue song, but stay with me, here). Hardie felt he had to mix it up. "People were getting tired of listening to my I-Pod for 8 hours a day." Among the DJ's were DJ Thrifty Lips, FLINCH, and Brthrbeat. On the bill for the weekend's evening shows included some of the top musical talent from the last two decades- Suicidal Tendencies, The Used, CKY, Hot Water Music, Biohazard, Thrice, and Circa Survive. Musink always seems to bring back some great musical talent.

**"It's pretty cool to see Suicidal Tendencies. I grew up with them."** (Corey Miller)

Saturday night headliner Thrice felt right at home for the Saturday night show. Formed in Irvine in 1998, they spent plenty of time in the streets adjacent to where they would be playing tonight. While spending some time chatting with drummer and percussionist Riley Breckenridge and the triple threat keyboard/guitarist/vocalist Teppei Teranishi, I found out a bit about their body art.

**"Mike Spasbo from Costa Mesa tattoos me. I like him not only for his artwork, but as a person. I like the idea of getting tattooed by someone who I can have a conversation with."** (Riley)

Their headlining set was incredible and spanned their

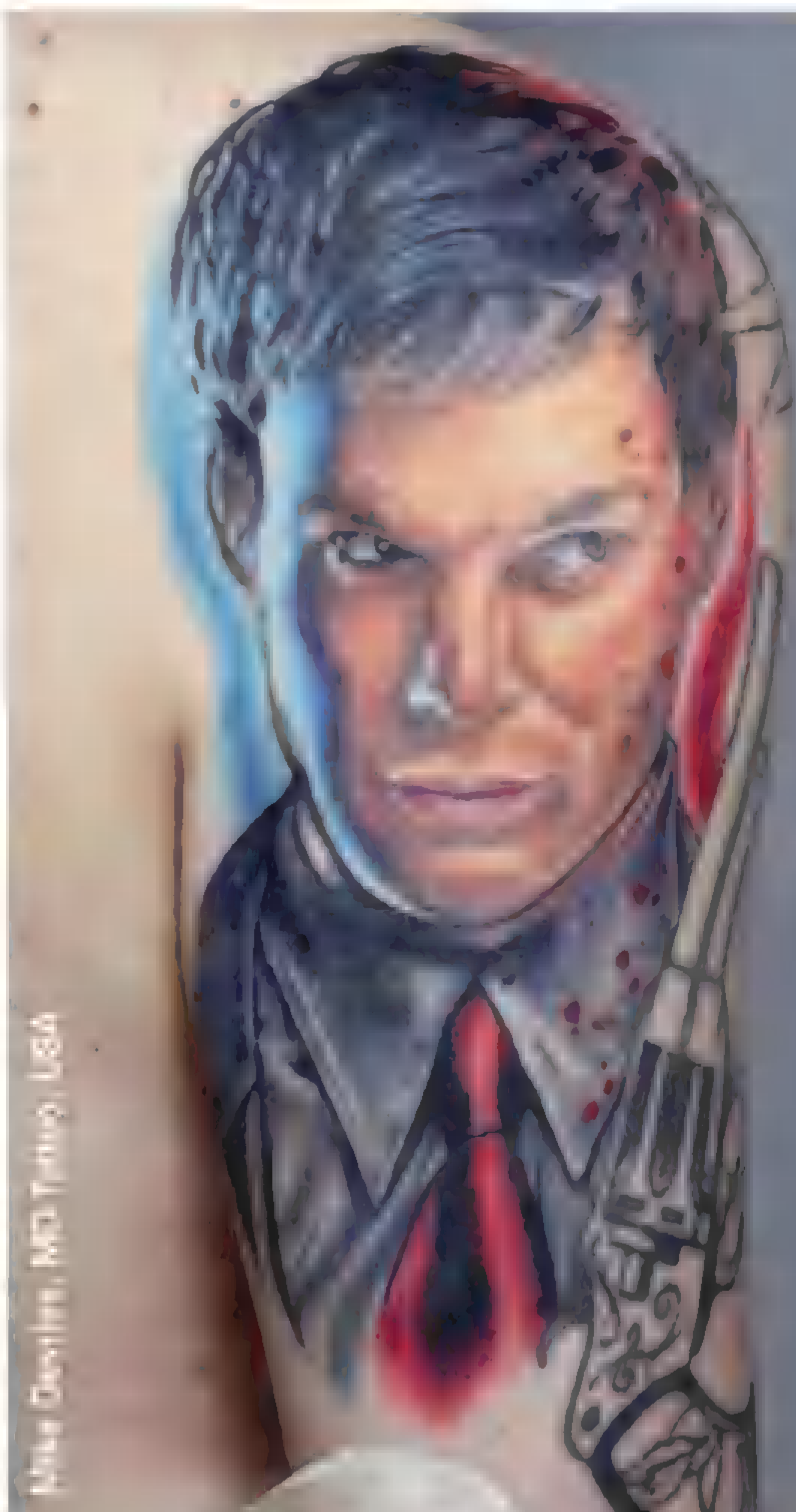


CONVENTION

# MUSKIEZ

TATTOO CONVENTION &  
MUSIC FESTIVAL 2011

Nike Guehen, MD Tattoo, USA



Nikko Hurtado, Black Anchor Collective, USA



Cecil Porter, Under the Gun Tattoo, USA







Cherita, Under the Gun, Hollywood, USA



Cherita, Under the Gun, Hollywood, USA

whole musical career, from raw metal and punk beats to mellow tunes infused with Southern soulfulness. It was impossible to weave through all the fans backstage and in the main hall- I think all of Los Angeles and Orange County was in the venue! They knew it was going to be a great reunion. What they didn't know is they would be awarded "Best Alternative Band" at the Orange County Music Awards that very night.

**"For us, it's cool to play with and for people we have known for years and years. This is definitely a hometown show."** *(Riley & Tepei)*

Sullen hosted this year's Miss Musink

contest on Saturday, and offered an exclusive contract with the brand to the winning contestant. The girls were all beautiful, talented, and very tattooed! Sullen's official Musink after-party was hosted by Nicco Hurtado from Black Anchor Collective and Steve Soto from Goodfellas Tattoo at 2nd Floor in Huntington Beach. This is no every day dive bar, but also a restaurant and art gallery.

**"I love the tattoo convention gypsy family."** *(Tyson Mcadoo)*

Wide flat screen televisions played the exclusive Sullen TV channel, in which Sullen Angels such as Bernadette Macias interview the top tattoo artists.

If you check out their channel, you can find top of the hour news bits like Norm's new graffiti inspired shop, Willrise in Los Angeles and what happened at Good Time Charlies' 35th Anniversary party. If the little birdie who told me what's in store for next year's Musink is on to something, I will see you there and you might end up in the Tattoo Life studio showing off your ink.



## COVER GIRL

TEXT BY SIMONE SACCO  
PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN SAINT



[WWW.TWITTER.COM/TRANSCENDNOW](http://WWW.TWITTER.COM/TRANSCENDNOW)

# Harmony: "BEAUTY CAN COME FROM THE STRANGEST PLACES..."

UNUSUAL TATTOOS, LOVE FOR THE POETIC ART OF LEWIS CARROLL AND DYLAN THOMAS, A MIND THAT AIMS RIGHT TO INDIA AND THE CONSTANT DESIRE TO LEARN ABOUT THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE: HARMONY ROSE IS ALSO THE QUEEN OF PARADOXES, AS SHE SAYS, BUT IN THIS INTERVIEW FOR TATTOO LIFE SHE WAS ABSOLUTELY AMAZING...

**H** I HARMONY, TELL ME EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU: WHO ARE YOU, WHAT DO YOU LIKE, WHICH ARE YOUR GOALS, ETC. I'm curious about life, death, and art in general. I enjoy embracing paradox. An example? I've been a buyer for a philosophy bookstore, as well as a professional Dominatrix; I've lived in India and like to party in Hollywood.

I think education is everywhere....

**HARMONY ROSE IS YOUR NICKNAME, I SUPPOSE...**

No, Harmony Rose is my birth name (she laughs)! It was difficult to live up to when I was an angsty, teenage punker, but I think I've grown into it...

**WHEN DID YOU FALL IN LOVE FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH THE TATTOO ART?**

Simple: I've always loved it! Actually

I can't think of a better artistic investment.

**HOW DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR TERRIFIC AND AMAZING SUBJECTS? IN MY OPINION YOUR TATTOOS AREN'T THE USUAL AND CHEESY FEMALE SUBJECTS LIKE HEARTS, STARS, FRUITS AND STUFF LIKE THAT...**

I like girly stuff, but I'm not hung up on the image. Beauty can come from the strangest, most disgusting places,









to paraphrase Alexander McQueen. That generally sums up my choice of subjects. My sleeve is based on my collection of ammonite fossils; something resonates with me about the primordial involution and evolution of the wormy vortex.

**WHY A SCARY DRAGON ON YOUR BACK?**

The creature on my back is based on John Tenniel's illustration of Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem (author's note), 'The Jabberwocky' which I've been able to recite since age 4. I'm fascinated by the way meaningless words can evoke imagery and feeling...

**WHEN WILL YOU START ANOTHER SLEEVE ON YOUR RIGHT ARM?**

No plans for another sleeve just yet... Next projects are for my sides. A large, black & grey stupa (a Buddhist mandala-shaped funerary monument) on one side, incorporating my father's ashes in the ink, and the Dylan Thomas poem, *The force that through the green fuse drives the flower, on the other side.*

**DO YOU LIKE MUSIC? WHICH ARE YOUR FAVOURITE RECORDS OR BANDS IN GENERAL?**

I grew up listening to Pain Teens, Tool, Skinny Puppy, and Outkast, and went to all the Babyland and Crash Worship

shows in LA in the 90s. Lately I've been into Otto von Schirach, Die Antwoord, Venetian Snares, Lil Wayne, and Robyn.

**WHICH ARE YOUR NEXT PROFESSIONAL PROJECTS, HARMONY?**

I'll continue doing live clinic installations as Nurse Amanita with the performance-art group Art of Bleeding (<http://www.artofbleeding.com>). And I'll keep busy doing more sitting for artists such as Michael Hussar, writing, traveling, experiencing, and learning!

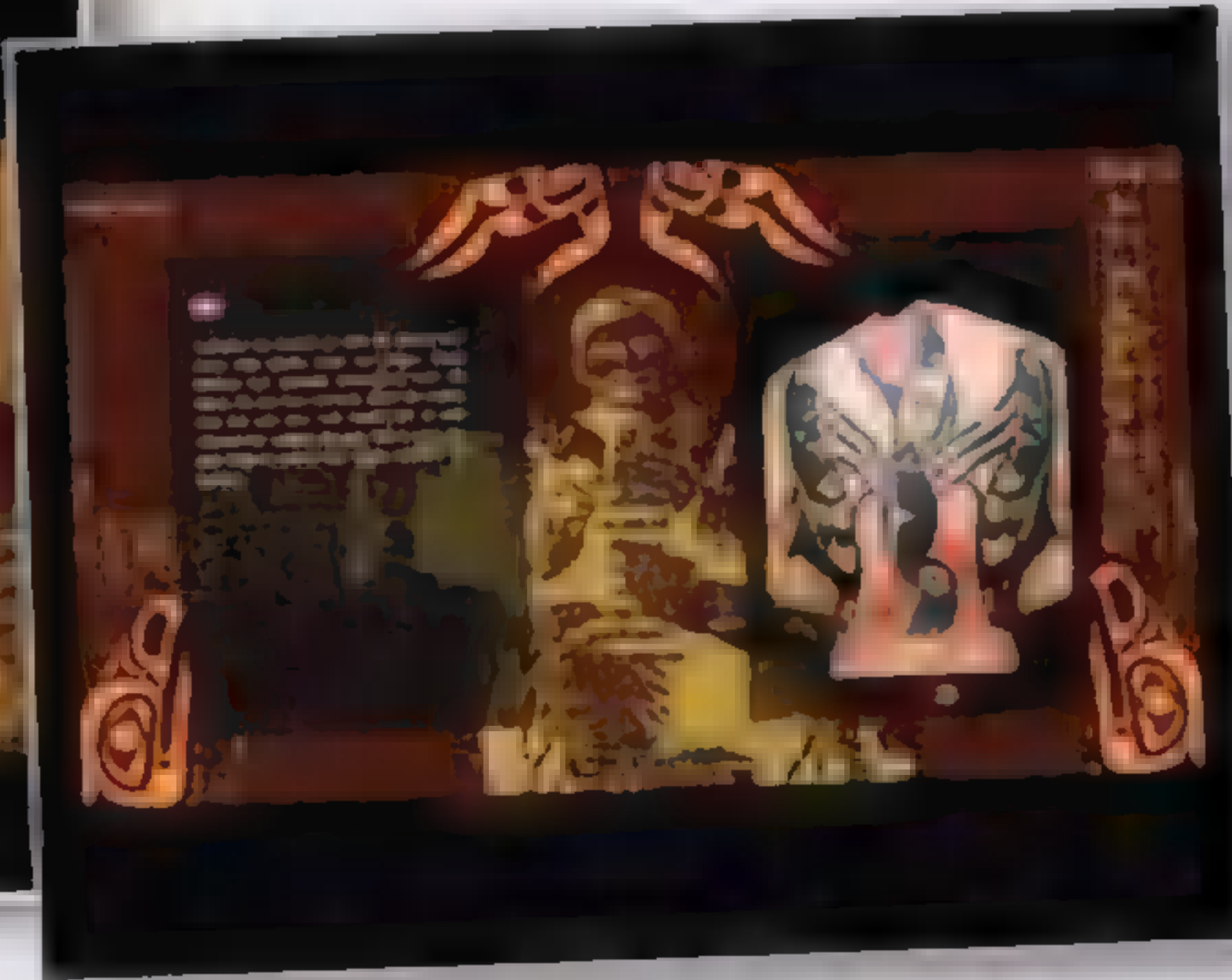






## INTERNET

BY SIMONE SACCO



### WWW.JEROENFRANKEN.NL

#### THE "VIRTUAL HOUSE" OF A MASTER OF TRIBAL

We certainly don't have to introduce Dutch artist Jeroen Franken to the tattoo world again: he is a master of tribal tattoos that Jeroen himself studied for years after his several trips to Borneo. On his bilingual site (English and Dutch), mister Franken uploaded an incredible collection of his tattoos – divided into female and male subjects – and his paintings, these are more traditional and based on legendary sea travels. Check out the "Info" space (top right): he works at Seven Seas Tattoo in Tilburg. For appointments: [sevensseastattoos@upcmail.nl](mailto:sevensseastattoos@upcmail.nl)



### WWW.KEATATTOO.COM

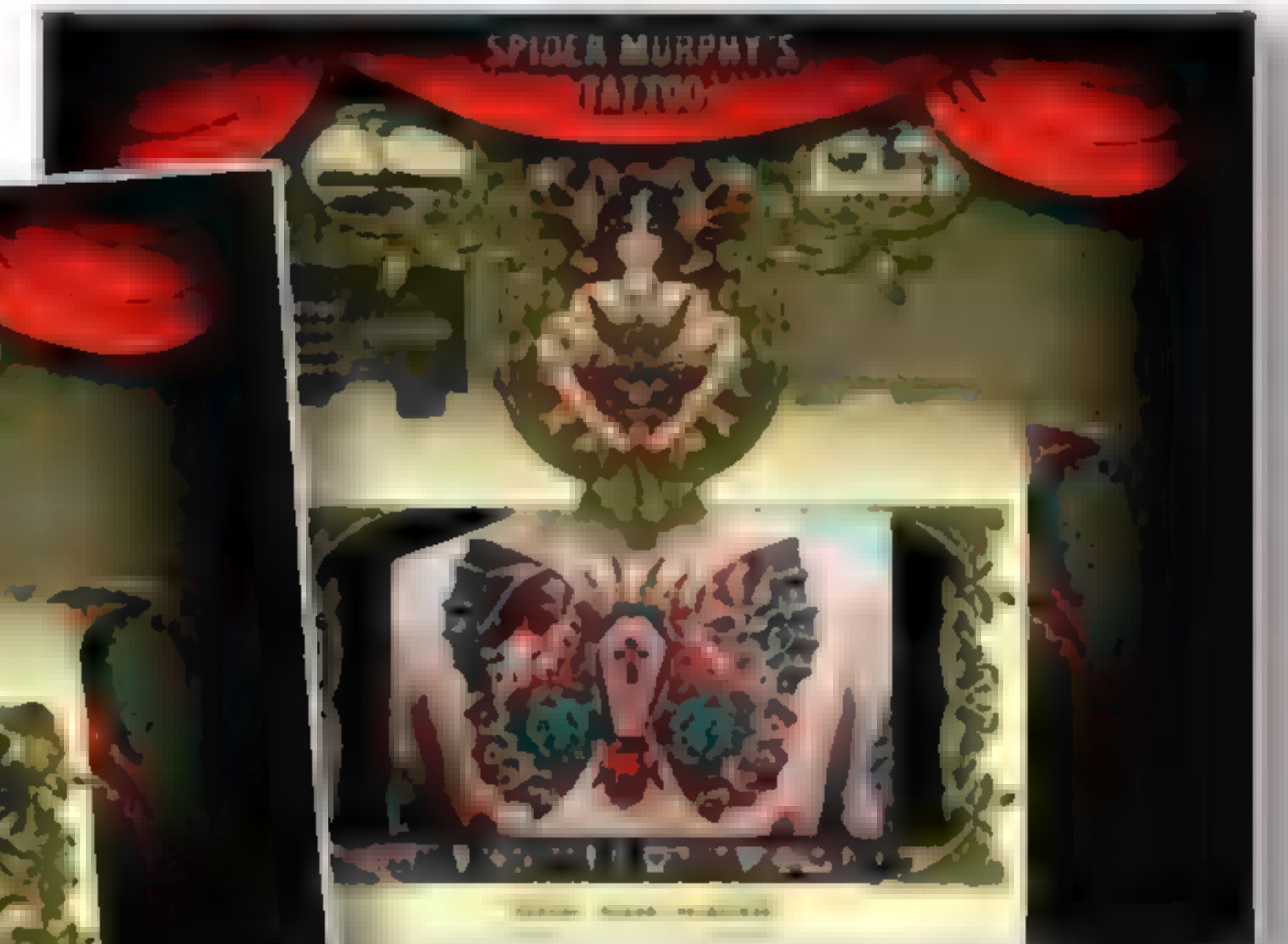
#### KINDNESS FROM FRANCE...

He flies by on his Vespa – in the flash animation that appears when you enter the site – Bruno Kea, French tattooist (his studio is at 14 on Boulevard Damesne in Fontainebleau, in the region of Île-de-France) who we like a lot for the way he prepared his "virtual home" web-style. The style, in fact, takes inspiration from the States of the roaring 50's and lots of attention is given to the equipment used in his Kea Tattoo. It is as if he were saying: great to joke around and have fun, but when it is time to get down to work, we gotta be serious! Ah, if you want to fix an appointment with Bruno his email is: [brunokea@keatattoo.com](mailto:brunokea@keatattoo.com)

### WWW.SPIDERMURPHYS.COM

#### A MUST IF YOU LOVE TRADITIONAL!

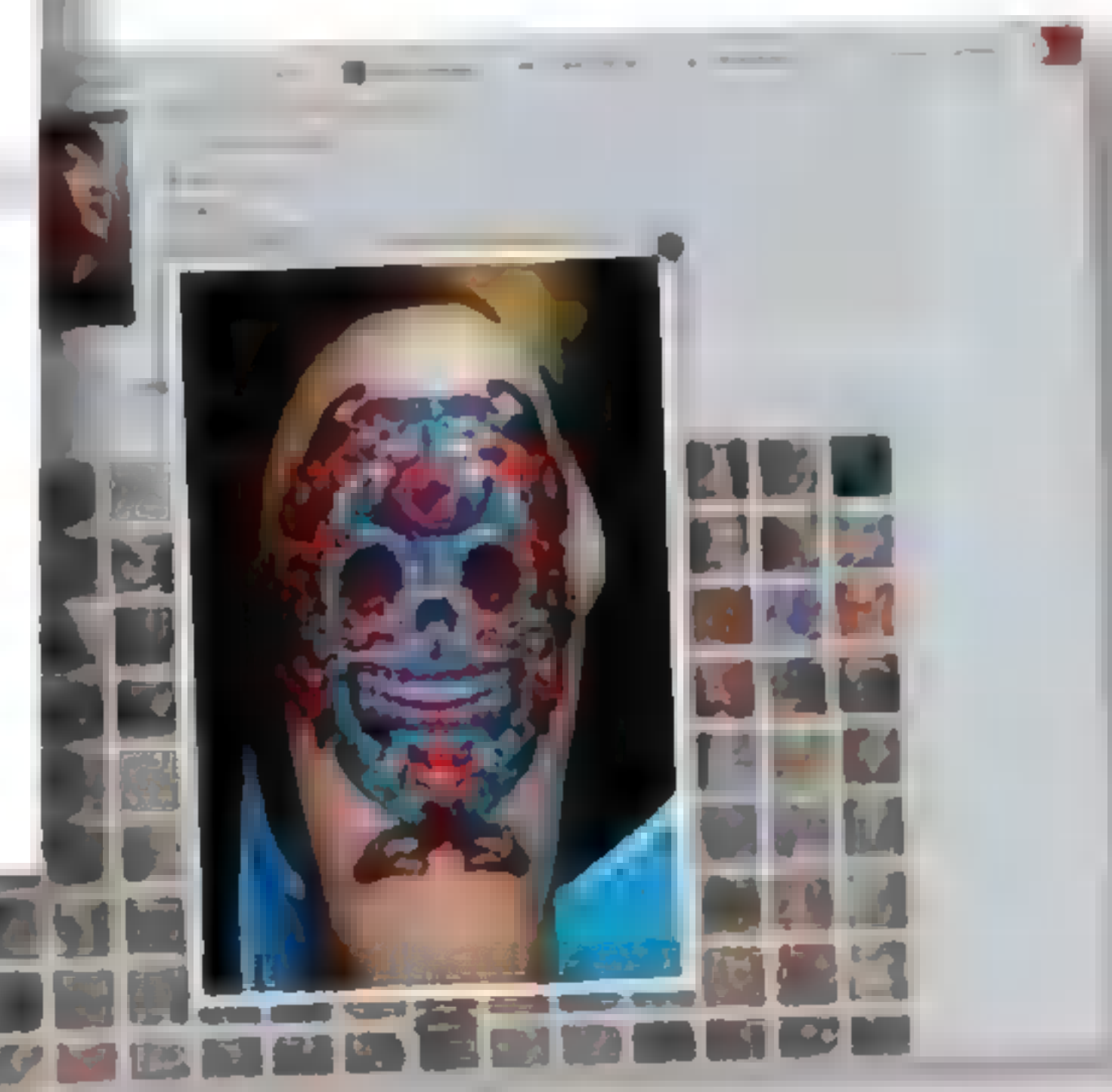
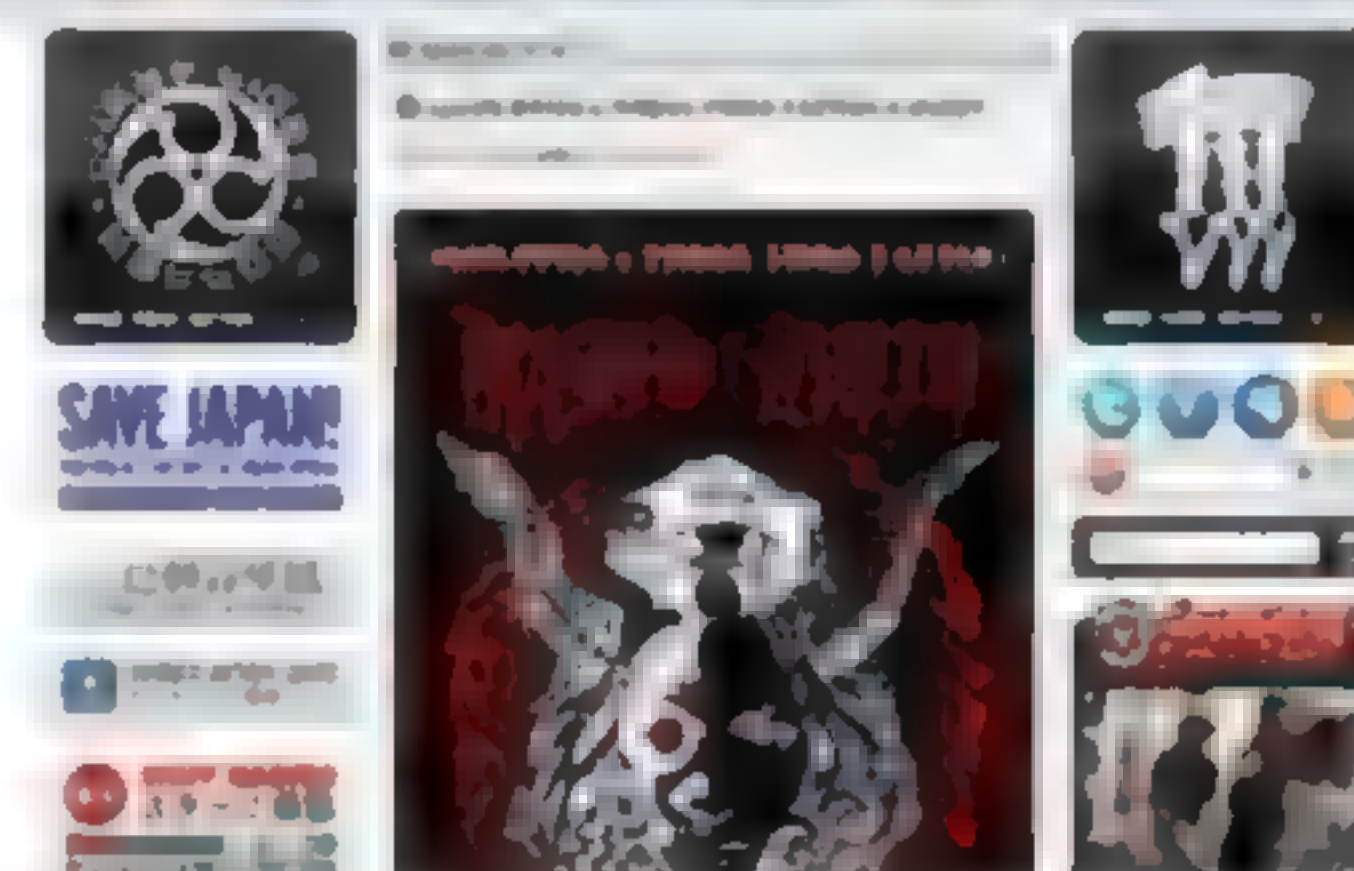
A real legend (closed in four walls) of American traditional tattoo, the studio Spyder Murphy's located at 1006 of Lincoln Avenue in downtown San Rafael, California. The site, very basic and filled with traditional symbology, shows us the portfolio of the artists who work at Spyder (Theo Mindell, Matt Howse, Stuart Cripwell, Bryan Randolph, Paul Anthony Dobleman and Heather Haley) and offers us the possibility of purchasing flash for 200\$ per set. Ok, you want a Spyder Murphy's tattoo? Get in line and don't forget the studio is open 7 days a week, from noon to 7 pm.



### WWW.THREETIDESTATTOO.COM

#### POP CULTURE FROM THE HEART OF TOKYO

Almost a blog full of ironic and interesting posts. This is the site of Three Tides Tattoo in Tokyo, it's more than a conventional website... They have always been innovative as concerns tattoo art, they are highly appreciated thanks to their amazing combination of horror and Japanese subjects, but in this site (bilingual English and Japanese) they prefer to give life to a great "pop contamination" without forgetting to draw our attention to the recent tragedy of the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan. "Save Japan!", is written on a banner on the left. Message is pretty clear. What else can we say: you've got our respect!



#### GIVE VISIBILITY TO YOUR SITE!

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# XIV INTERNATIONAL TATTOO EXPO



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## BARCELONA

# 30 Sep. 1,2 OCT 2011

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BOOK

# RYUSHIN & KOKORO

**IREZUMI AND THE ART OF HORIYOSHI III:  
HIS ART, HIS WORLD, HIS MIND AND HIS HEART**

BY MARGHERITA B.

**IREZUMI: THROUGH THE ART OF HORIYOSHI III AND THE PHOTOS OF THE JAPANESE CULTURE AND TRADITION COLLECTED IN THE BOOKS *RYUSHIN* AND *KOKORO*, THE TWO BOOKS THAT INAUGURATED THE SUCCESSFUL EDITORIAL PRODUCTION OF THE PUBLISHER KOFUU-SENJU PUBLICATIONS, FOUNDED BY MATTI SEDHOLM AND ALEX REINKE AND PRESENTED FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE MILANO TATTOO CONVENTION 2011 THIS PAST FEBRUARY.**

**I**n the introduction to the book *Kokoro*, Matti Sedholm wrote: "Years later, I found myself sitting together with my friend Alex Reinke in an upstairs sleeping room inside irezumi master Horiyoshi III's house... We are going through photographs taken on our previous trip to Kyoto, and the fabulous Soto-Zen temple in Eiheiji to name but a few. We had just begun collecting images for the book you are now holding in your hands, being extremely enthusiastic. Master Horiyoshi III suddenly stood in the door-way asking if we would like to see some of the brush and ink paintings he had created for our first book project



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we had been discussing a few days earlier... He carried into the room a thick pile of monochrome images of dragons, paired with Buddha's, demons, deities and heroes, and lars and ridde things, explain history and background... The outcome of all this was our first publication - *Ryushin*...". These words are the possible answer to the question we could ask the two editors on how the two books were put together. *Ryushin* was the first one to be published, it includes the wonderful paintings made by Horiyoshi III, Matti Sedholm speaks about in the introduction. Individual images that sheet after sheet move and show the Japanese traditions wisely analyzed and







lines and make people respect its tradition and – vice versa – the right innovations that were made in this art. To do this they chose wonderful images of tattoos made by Horiyoshi III, beautiful photos taken all over Japan that show its real side, made of temples, works of art, but also the faces of ordinary people and images of nature, so important in the artistic representations and even in tattoo. And most of all what emerges is the deep spiritual tradition that is at the base of

the outlines of the irezumi; it is the desire to show, through a book, the soul that lays behind those visual representations a Western hardly knows about and much less understands.

It is the desire to find an answer to the question: what is irezumi? If the tattoo world irezumi is very often considered a "style", an assembly of icons and images to respect for a composition worthy of being defined in the Japanese style. What the two editors of these books wanted to do was to find a new approach to irezumi, to understand it, to understand its

irezumi and that in the Zen philosophy finds its roots. Hence, the title of the book, because the word Kokoro (heart) and the ideogram it is made of becomes the symbol and ideal representation. A word that is linked to the Zen world which is always present in the mind of every Japanese man, linked to martial arts, the sense of courage and of Japanese art. A world with which every day a man in Japan has to confront himself, and to which Horiyoshi himself is devoted to, piece after piece, with patience and respect for what was done before him. "What the book tries to do, however, is to present this art form and the environment from which it emanates by means of a new, visual approach designed not only

artistically represented by the hand of the great irezumi master. 199 monochrome images painted using ink and a brush, as quick prints that want to show the artistic identity of the irezumi through its characters, symbols and "allegoric" figures. This is the mature and powerful art of the great master. But *Kokoro* is the book that completes



for tattoo artists and their clients but for all people interested in integrating East Asian lifestyles and philosophies into their own. In a series of images focusing on the work and daily life of the master, it seeks to capture some of the treasures and some of the essence of this traditional trade, which uses the body as its canvas. In particular it aims to give the viewer a sense of the Zen-based spirit of kokoro from which the true nature and practice of irezumi derive.



## CONVENTION



Josh Gerico, Electric Chair Tattoos, Bny City, USA

Andy Kruth, Electric Chair Tattoos, Bny City, USA





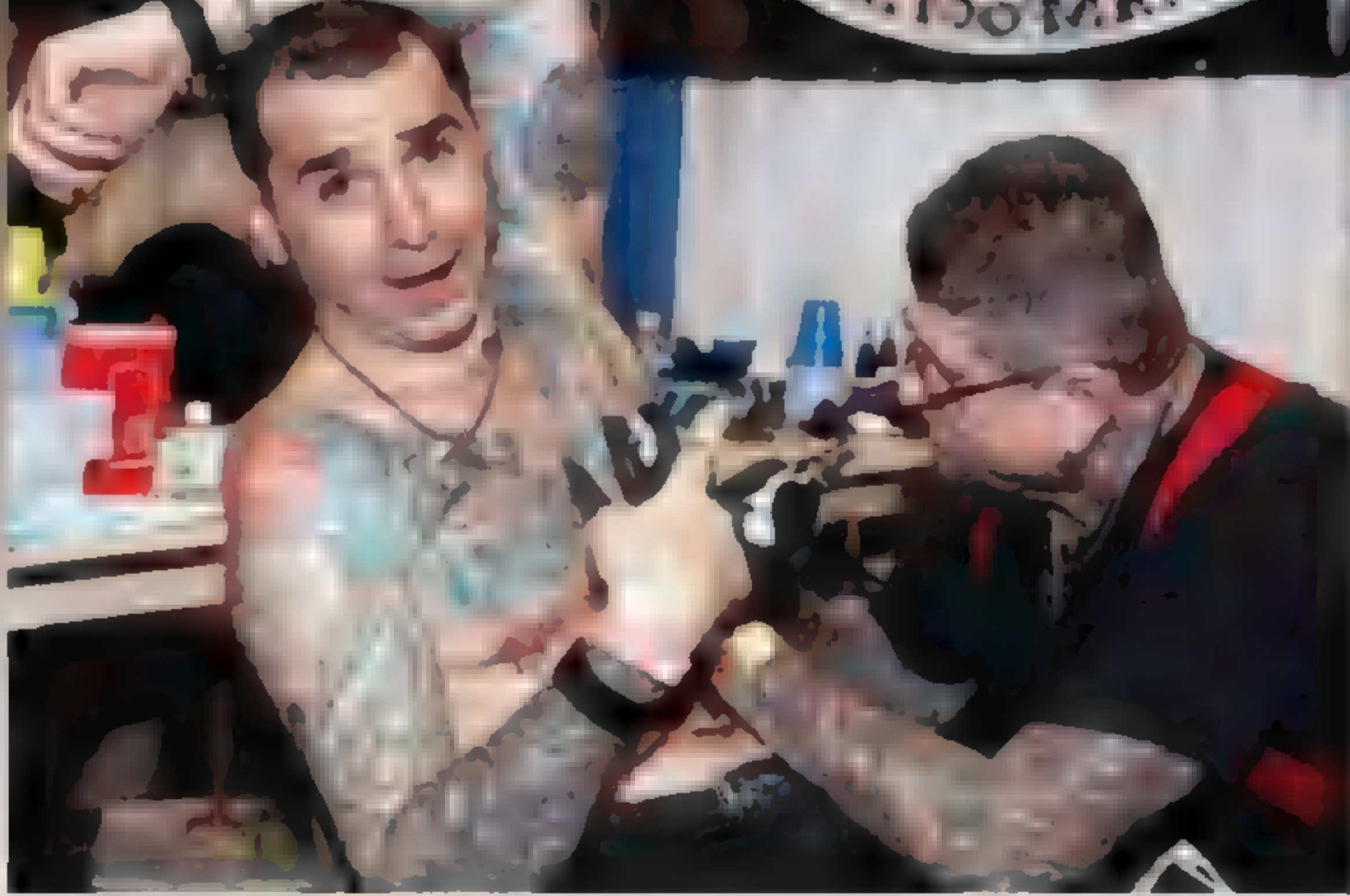
25th-27th February 2011

# 16th Annual Motor City TATTOO EXPO

The 16th Annual  
Motor City  
TATTOO EXPO

PHOTOS BY RICHARD TODD





IN THE URBAN AND EMPOWERING ENVIRONMENT OF THE RENAISSANCE CENTER-MARIOTT HOTEL, BUBBLY DETROIT ONCE AGAIN SURPRISED THE NUMEROUS TATTOO ENTHUSIASTS WITH AN EXTRA-LARGE CONVENTION WHERE OVER TWO HUNDRED TATTOOISTS SHOWED THEIR MOST VARIED AND WILDEST STYLES (TRADITIONAL, REALISTIC, HORROR, BIOMECHANICAL, ETC.) AND PAID TRIBUTE TO REAL TATTOO MASTERS SUCH AS BOB TYRRELL, JUAN PUENTE AND GILL MONTIE. AND TATTOO LIFE'S CAMERA JUST COULDN'T MISS A SHOW LIKE THIS...

In Michigan, at the end of February it is still very cold. But we really want to tell you about warmth. Once again, Detroit welcomed everybody in its usual warm manner, filled with passion for genuine ink organizing the 16th tattoo convention. The convention here is called **Annual Motor City Tattoo Expo** as a tribute of course to the real American automobile industry.

The location, also in 2011, was the (highly) appreciated and large Renaissance Center-Mariott Hotel. A large area of 7 skyscrapers (!!!) architecturally connected one with the other. In a specific area of the Renaissance center, a large number of visitors crowded the halls from early February 25, and walked non-stop through the booths with the idea of getting tattooed (for those who were lucky enough...) or observing up close (sometimes the line was even meters long in the most crowded booths!) the over two hundred tattooists at the convention.

Among some of the finest artists at this 2011 edition we just have to mention the great **Bob Tyrrell** who entertained the visitors with his incredible horror-dependent works. Of all the styles represented in the Motor-City we must say that one of the most popular was the



Mikes Rollout



# DETROIT

WorldMags

CONVENTION



Sean Herman, Royal Street, Daphn, USA



Clown, Low Rider Tattoo, Costa Mesa, USA



Jeremy Miller, Pigment Dermagraphics, Austin, USA



May Miller, Low Rider Tattoos, Costa Mesa, USA





Beto Munoz, Rising Phoenix, Addison, USA

realistic style thanks to a winning crew formed by **Jack Rudy**, **Mike DeVries**, **Shane O'Neill** and **Nikko Hurtado** then joined by a fifth member **Tony Olivas**, for a festival of portraits on skin ... better than the best! The traditional style which is always one of the most popular was rocking with **Juan Puente** (a true California legend with an endless punk rock and hardcore 80's-style culture: the "old school", you know...) while bio-mechanical was perfectly represented by **Tony Ciavarro** who is a must here in Detroit (he had been here in 2010 too).



Don, Bagaboo Tattoo, Grand Blanc, USA

Another icon at the Renaissance center was **Gill Montie**, one for whom his fans would pay gold just to get one of his famous skulls tattooed forever on skin. Other artists worthy of mention are **Jason Ackerman**, who was busy drawing his fun creations between comics and funny-style; or how can we not mention the only Italian of the crew, **Tom Tattoo** (real name: Tommaso Buglioni), eclectic and unique character for the way he faces tattoo art with commitment, consistence and a smile on his lips. Ok, we think we have said enough, even too much.



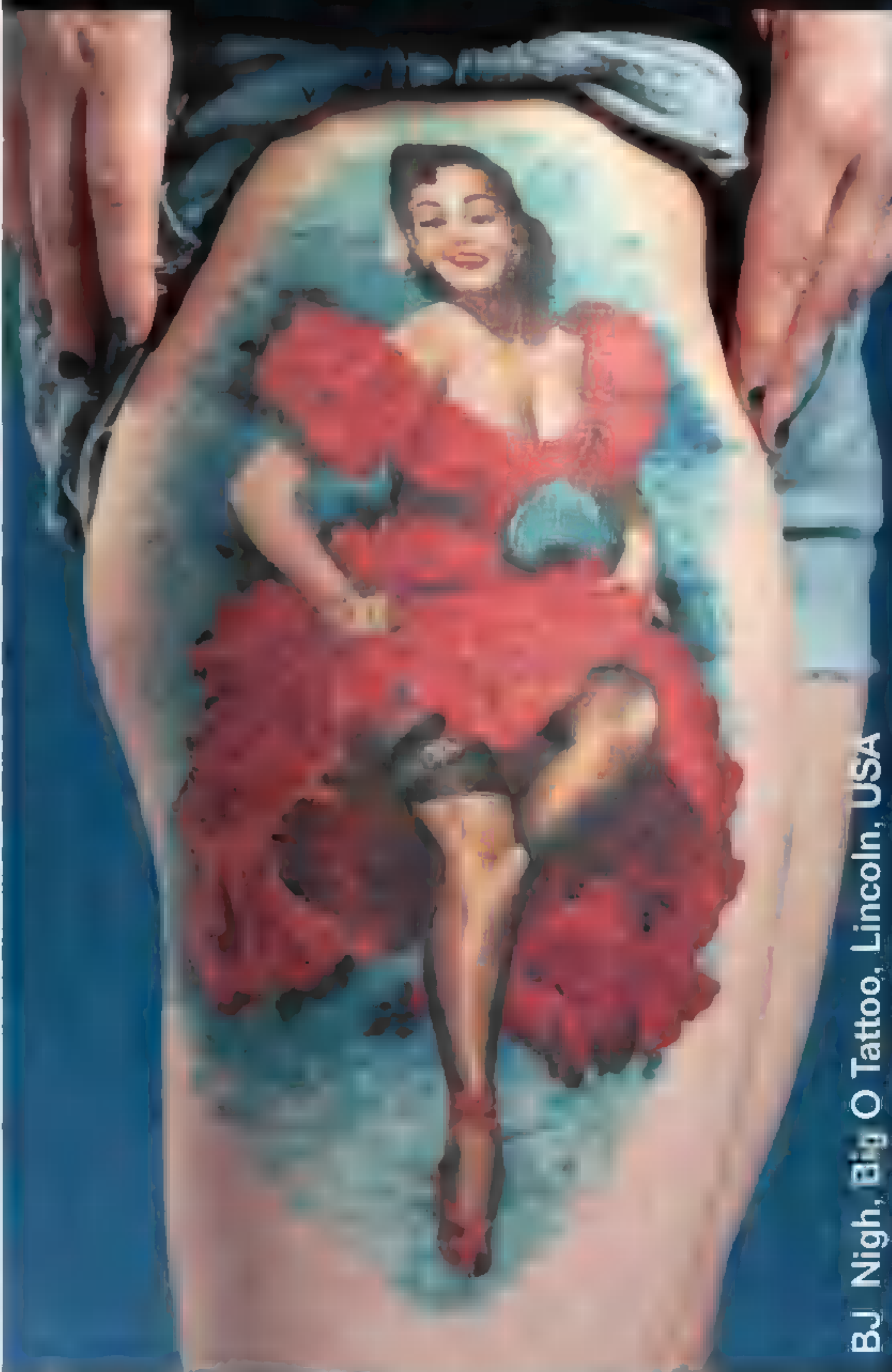
# DETROIT

WorldMagi

## CONVENTION



Sean Herman



BJ Nigh, Big O Tattoo, Lincoln, USA



Jim Van Glahn, Ohl Town Tattoo, St Cloud, USA

The rest you will have to discover for yourself on the pages of this article. So for those who were there and for those who weren't, Detroit – with its colors, thousands of tattoos and its happy February chaos – is back again for the pleasure and joy of your eyes. Enjoy!





# NAPOLI

TATTOO  
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SMOKESTACK LIGHTNIN' (D)

THE FIREBIRDS (UK)

RUBY ANN (POR)

NICO DUPORTAL & THE RHYTHM DUDES (FRA)

MIKE PENNY AND THE MOONSHINERS (GER)

THE BLUES WILLIES (ITA)

JOHNNY TROUBLE FEATURING IRIS ROMEN (GER)

(JOHNNY CASH JUNE CARTER DUETTE)

RED WAGONS (ITA)

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TATTOO ARTIST

# NICK BAXTER

# The.tattoo genius

TEXT BY DAVID "DATS" RACANA

[www.nickbaxter.com](http://www.nickbaxter.com)





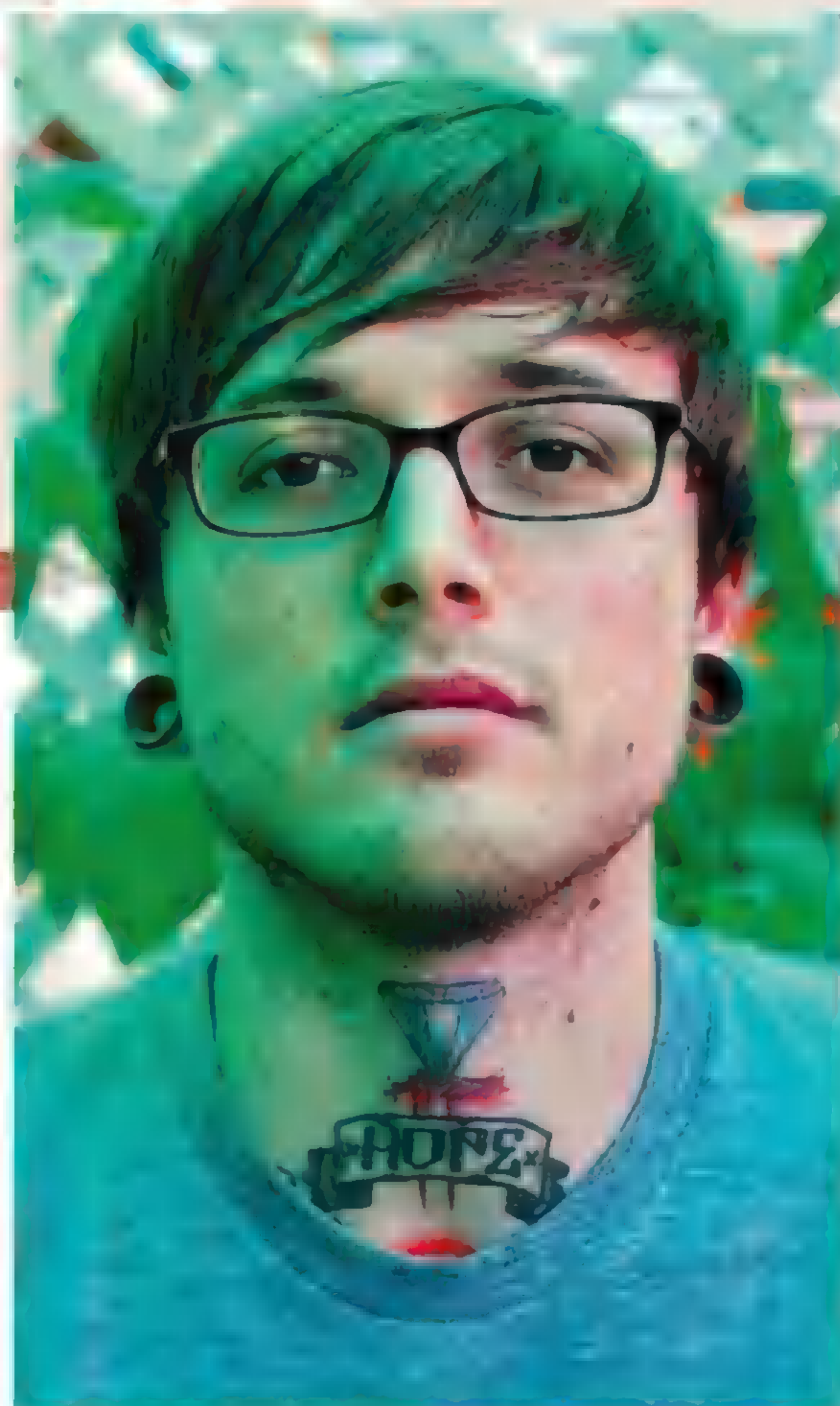


**THE FIRST TIME I MET NICK BAXTER, IT WAS AT GENEVA AIRPORT. I PICKED HIM UP TO BRING HIM TO THE EVIAN TATTOO SHOW. HE'S ONE OF THE BEST TATTOO ARTISTS IN THE WORLD : ALWAYS DOING HIS BEST FOR HIS CUSTOMERS, ALWAYS NICE, INTELLIGENT, AND WORKING EVERYDAY TO TAKE PART IN THE TATTOO REVOLUTION, LIKE HIS SPIRITUAL FATHER, GUY AITCHINSON.**

**H**OW OLD ARE YOU, AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TATTOOING FOR ?  
I'm 29 years old, and I was born and raised in Connecticut, USA. A few years ago I moved to Austin, Texas, and in 2011 I reached my 10-year tattooing milestone.

**CAN YOU TELL US WHAT IS THE THING THAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO BE A TATTOO ARTIST ?**

I've had a lifelong interest in art, and a lifelong urge to express myself creatively, through images and words. During my teenage years, tattooing caught my attention because it seemed like a perfect way to combine my artistic creativity with my rebellious, countercultural attitude, in addition to being a fun way to make money. I admired the lifestyle freedom and status that the local tattooers seemed to possess, and disillusioned with my sheltered suburban upbringing, I sought an







## TATTOO ARTIST



apprenticeship from the age of 16. As I've grown older, my original rebellion has greatly evolved into a more mature approach to living "against the grain", and I don't think tattoos are very rebellious anymore, everyone has them, but that sort of attitude and energy was a large part of my original curiosity.

### HOW DID YOU LEARN TO TATTOO ?

After trying to find an apprenticeship at local tattoo shops as a teenager, by age 18 I finally found a local tattooer named Mark Savaikis who was willing to teach me, in return for cash payment and working at his shop. So I paid the money, scrubbed tubes and swept floors, and learned all the basic skills of tattooing over a 6-month period. Then I did my first

tattoo, practiced on my friends for a few more months, and then quickly began tattooing real customers. After 6 more months of walk-in tattooing, I moved to a more custom art-oriented studio called Darkside Tattoo, where I continued to learn some more advanced aspects of tattooing by observing the guys there, like Lou Jacque, Eric Merrill, Julio Rodriguez, Sean O'Hara, Anthony Plaza, and Joe Capobianco.

### DID YOU ATTEND A SPECIAL ART SCHOOL ?

After graduating from grade school, where I attended special arts programs for creative students, I immediately enrolled in a local art college in Connecticut. I studied art at this school for 1.5 years until I landed my tattoo apprenticeship. Soon after beginning my apprenticeship, I dropped out of art school to focus on learning tattooing full-time. Over the years, I've continued my art education on my own, without college. I still take art classes whenever I can to keep my mind and my skills sharp, but I've never completed my original college degree program.

### WHO ARE THE TATTOO MASTERS THAT INFLUENCE YOUR ART ?

Throughout my career, the tattooing





of Guy Aitchison has been a profound influence on my approach to the craft, and the technical process of tattooing. Of course there have been many other influences along the way, such as the old Darkside crew, Paul Booth and the original Last Rites crew, the Kern brothers, and many of the friends I've made like Adrian Dominic, Sean Zee, Jeff Ensminger.

**YOU'VE SPENT SOME TIME WITH GUY AITCHISON. IN MANY WAYS, HE HAS INSPIRED A MODERN-DAY TATTOO REVOLUTION. HOW HAS THIS AFFECTED YOU ?**

Part of my early tattoo learning was buying a copy of the original notebook-format of Guy's book, "Reinventing The Tattoo." I spent many intense hours reading and studying this book as a young tattooer, and it sparked my imagination, opening me up to the possibilities of the tattoo art form. I channeled this creative energy into developing the style and techniques I use today. Studying Guy's tattoos, and getting tattooed by him (and Paul Booth, at

the same time) early in my career gave me the courage to experiment, so I started thinking of new ideas to try on skin, such as pixelated tattoos, halftone printing dots, water and fire that looked like they were in motion, and photographic effects like focus and blur, and lens flares. After several more years, Guy caught notice of my improving work, and eventually invited me to collaborate with him on a tattoo project. This was a full sleeve on the amazing tattooer, Carson Hill. Since that time we have also collaborated on some paintings, and in 2010 my tattooing career came full circle when Guy asked me to tattoo him. He and I have many similar attitudes towards life, society, and politics, as well as sharing a strong work ethic, so this helped form a good artistic relationship between us.

**POLITICS SEEM TO BE VERY IMPORTANT IN YOUR LIFE. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU'RE STRAIGHTEDGE, YOU SPEAK OUT REGARDING ANIMAL RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, YOU'VE**

**MADE A POSTER FOR THE ANTI-CAPITALIST EVENT BUY NOTHING DAY. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT?**

Politics are indeed very important in my life, but I'd like to clarify the word "politics" because in my country, the normal use of that word has a very negative meaning for most people. To me, politics doesn't refer to elections and politicians and government, it refers to a wider sense of awareness and caring involvement in one's community, the world, social circles, and culture; essentially, knowing what's happening around you and realizing the effects of your thoughts, actions, and decisions. This conscious, actively engaged approach to life is what I mean by politics, and for me, it has its foundation in a sober, drug-free lifestyle. Since I grew up involved in the punk rock/hardcore music scene, I adopted the label "Straight Edge" which refers to this way of living and originates from song lyrics by the hardcore punk band Minor Threat. However, to me Straight Edge is just a sub





## TATTOO ARTIST

cultural label that refers to the deeper practice of striving to live with extreme mental clarity, focus, awareness, and self-respect or self-love. We do this by abstaining from intoxication, addictive substances, and confronting our own impulsive behaviors. Upon this solid foundation,

it's possible to engage in all sorts of personal health practices, lifestyles, and spiritual or worldly pursuits with a higher degree of effectiveness and receptivity. It allows a person to be more in tune with consequences and perceptive of injustice and the suffering of others. So of course, in this modern world that has been turned upside down and heavily damaged by ruthless capitalism and

corporate greed, if we care to look we can see many people, societies, cultures, and non-human life forms that are suffering or being exploited. Logically, next comes the question "what can I do about it?". And I think most answers are valid, just as long as we are trying with sincere intentions, to do something, no matter how small. In my life, this means speaking out whenever I'm given the





chance to have an audience, such as with this interview, or on my website, or in my interactions with friends and family. I also donate money and time to various causes that inspire me. But the most important thing for me, is to make sure I'm living well, treating myself, my relationships, and my surroundings with care and compassion and always remaining open-minded so I can keep learning

and improving. I try to "be the change I want to see." If I had to make a short list of the most influential forces that have shaped my life experience, it would be: art, hardcore/punk/D.I.Y. ethic, anarchism, indigenous cultures, nature, and natural health, meditation and Buddhist teachings/philosophy, the principles of Choice Theory and Non-Violent Communication (NVC). Without going into long explanations

of each, I'll just say that they all interact and blend together to give my life value, meaning, truth, and purpose. Because of them, I choose a different lifestyle than the dominant Western, capitalist/consumer lifestyle that surrounds me. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the things in the list above can do some Internet searching with those words to find various resources like books





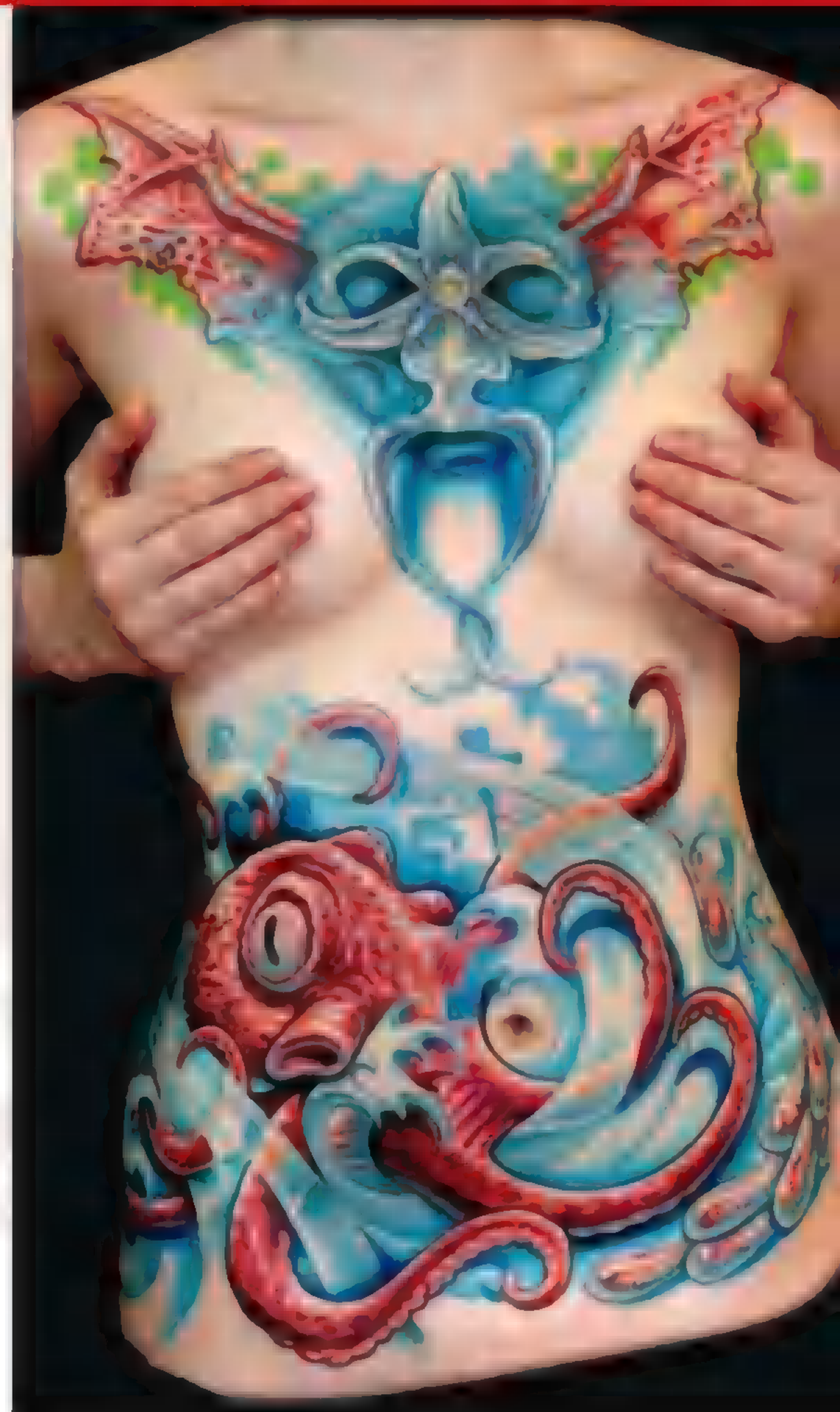
## TATTOO ARTIST

or websites. A favorite one of mine relating to modern anarchism and inspired living is [www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com), and one of my favorite health and natural lifestyle resources is [www.danielvitalis.com](http://www.danielvitalis.com)

**PAINTING IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN YOUR LIFE: CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR LAST BOOK, "SHARP-FOCUS REALISM IN OIL"...**

After approximately 8 years of developing my painting skills and knowledge on my own, in addition to my tattooing skills, I started to realize the many connections between the two artistic mediums that were of extreme benefit to my overall progression as an artist. I experienced firsthand how important it is as a tattooer to practice art in other mediums in order to build your skills and avoid stagnation. So

I began to formulate the ideas for a painting seminar, to help advance the artistry of the tattoo community, after being asked to teach a class at the Hell City Tattoo Festival here in the USA, around 2007. I focused my 3-hour seminar on the basics of oil painting, such as materials and supplies, archival techniques, and then progressing into more advanced special effects techniques such as layering and glazing, to achieve convincing realism with oil paint. The class was aimed at people who already have some experience with either tattooing or oil painting, or both, as well as basic art knowledge of things like color theory, form, and light. In addition to the seminar, I wrote a short booklet explaining all of the concepts, which every participant received as part of the course. This booklet, combined with teaching the seminar over the last few years, inspired me to expand the original material into a much more thorough







130-page full size, hardcover book. This was published through Guy Aitchison's Proton Press, and released in November 2010. This book covers all of the information I teach in my seminar, and much more. It also features many full color reproductions of many of my paintings from the last 10 years, so it's great for art collectors, not just aspiring oil painters or tattooers. Anyone can order a copy of the book through [www.tattooeducation.com](http://www.tattooeducation.com)

**IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO ADD, OR TO SAY TO THE READERS OF TATTOOLIFE MAGAZINE ?**

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share my artwork and thoughts with you. I hope that what I've

done can enhance your life or inspire you in some way, just as I hope to be inspired and improved by what you all are doing.



# AGENDA

## Derby

**June 16/17, 2011**

New appointment with the State of the Art Tattoo, Body Art & Music festival to be held at the Assembly Rooms in Derby, UK.  
[www.tattoo-2001.com](http://www.tattoo-2001.com)

## Toronto

**June 17/18/19, 2011**

Canadian appointment with the 13th Northern Ink Xposure Tattoo Show to be held at the Toronto Hilton.  
[mcgrath.damian@gmail.com](mailto:mcgrath.damian@gmail.com)

## Alamo City

**June 24/25/26, 2011**

7th Alamo City Tattoo Show at the Live Oak Civic Center in Texas.  
[www.alamocitytattooshow.co](http://www.alamocitytattooshow.co)

## Miami

**June 24/25/26, 2011**

Appointment with the Tattoo LaPalooza Show in Miami, Florida, to vote for the first 'World's Best Tattoo'.  
[www.TattooLaPalooza.com](http://www.TattooLaPalooza.com)

## El Paso

**July 1/2/3, 2011**

2nd Texas Tattoo Showdown Festival to be held at the County Coliseum in beautiful El Paso.  
[www.myspace.com/texastattooshowdown](http://www.myspace.com/texastattooshowdown)  
[texastattooshowdown@gmail.com](mailto:texastattooshowdown@gmail.com)

## Asbury Park

**July 29/30/31, 2011**

Visionary Tattoo Arts Convention in New Jersey (USA) at the Convention Hall.  
[www.visionarytattooofest.com](http://www.visionarytattooofest.com)

## Taiwan

**August 5/6/7, 2011**

Taiwan International Tattoo Convention to be held in Taipei. The convention will be held along with a charity event in favor of the Childhood Burn Foundation.  
[www.tattoo.tw](http://www.tattoo.tw)

## Tattoo Jam

**August 5/6/7, 2011**

Appointment with the traditional Tattoo Jam to be held at the Racecourse of Doncaster, UK.  
[www.tattoojam.co.uk](http://www.tattoojam.co.uk)

## Transylvania

**August 12/13/14, 2011**

Appointment with the Transylvania Tattoo Expo in Sibiu (Romania).  
<http://www.tattooexpo.ro>  
[adda@transilvaniatattoo.ro](mailto:adda@transilvaniatattoo.ro)  
[ovidiu@transilvaniatattoo.ro](mailto:ovidiu@transilvaniatattoo.ro)

## Pyssdorf-Kolpinghaus

**August 12/13/14, 2011**

4th Starfire Tattoo Weekend in Austria.  
[www.starfiretattoo.com](http://www.starfiretattoo.com)

## Boxborough

**August 12/13/14, 2011**

Appointment with tattoo in Massachusetts at the Art Riot Expo at the Holiday Inn Boxborough, 242 Adams Place.  
[www.arriotexpo.com](http://www.arriotexpo.com)  
[deb@arriotexpo.com](mailto:deb@arriotexpo.com)

## Gleisdorf

**August 19/20/21, 2011**

Here comes the Austrian Styrian Tattoo Motor Show to be held in Gleisdorf at the end of the summer.  
[www.StyrianTattooShow.com](http://www.StyrianTattooShow.com)

## Green Bay

**August 25/26/27/28, 2011**

14th edition of the Rick's International Tattoo Convention to be held at the KI Convention Center/Hotel Sierra in Wisconsin.  
[rick@tattoosbyrick.com](mailto:rick@tattoosbyrick.com)  
info: 920-499-7425

## Phoenix

**August 26/27/28, 2011**

New edition of the Hell City Tattoo Fest 2011 "Let The Sin Begin" in Arizona.  
[www.hellcity.com](http://www.hellcity.com)

## Stockholm

**August 26/27/28, 2011**

New Stockholm Inkbash at the Munchenbryggeriet in Stockholm, (Sweden).  
[www.stockholminkbash.net](http://www.stockholminkbash.net)

## Jacksonville

**September 2/3/4, 2011**

Want to go to Florida? Well then go to the Jacksonville Tattoo Convention to be held at the Renaissance Resort/ World Golf Village.  
[www.conventionpros.com](http://www.conventionpros.com)  
[daughertyjack@hotmail.com](mailto:daughertyjack@hotmail.com)

## Boston

**September 2/3/4/5, 2011**

10th convention at the Back Bay Sheraton Hotel.  
[www.bostontattooconvention.com](http://www.bostontattooconvention.com)

## Assen

**September 9/10/11, 2011**

6th edition of the Assen Tattoo Convention (The Netherlands).  
[www.tattooconventieassen.com](http://www.tattooconventieassen.com)

## Montreal

**September 9/10/11, 2011**

9th edition of the Art Tattoo Montreal at 1160 de la Gauchetière W. Downtown

Montreal in Canada.

[www.arttattoomontreal.com](http://www.arttattoomontreal.com)  
[info@arttattoomontreal.com](mailto:info@arttattoomontreal.com)

## London

**September 23/24/25, 2011**

New appointment with the international London Tattoo Convention, 7th edition, to be held once again at the Tobacco Dock in London.  
[www.thelondontattooconvention.com](http://www.thelondontattooconvention.com)

## Las Vegas

**September 30, October 1-2, 2011**

New appointment with the Biggest Tattoo Show on Earth at the Mirage Resort & Casino Las Vegas.  
<http://lasvegastattooshow.com>  
[nfo@lasvegastattooshow.com](mailto:nfo@lasvegastattooshow.com)

## Barcelona

**September 30, October 1-2, 2011**

14th edition for the International Tattoo Expo to be held at La Farga de Hospitalet in Barcelona.  
[www.barcelonatattooexpo.com](http://www.barcelonatattooexpo.com)  
[convenciones@pro-arts.com](mailto:convenciones@pro-arts.com)

## Ottawa

**October 21/22/23, 2011**

3rd Ottawa-Gatineau Tattoo Expo to be held at the Hilton "Casino" Lac Leamy in Canada.  
[www.ottawatattooexpo.com](http://www.ottawatattooexpo.com)

## Florence

**November 4/5/6, 2011**

New appointment with the Florence (Italy) Tattoo Convention to be held at the Fortezza da Basso.  
[www.florencetattooconvention.com](http://www.florencetattooconvention.com)



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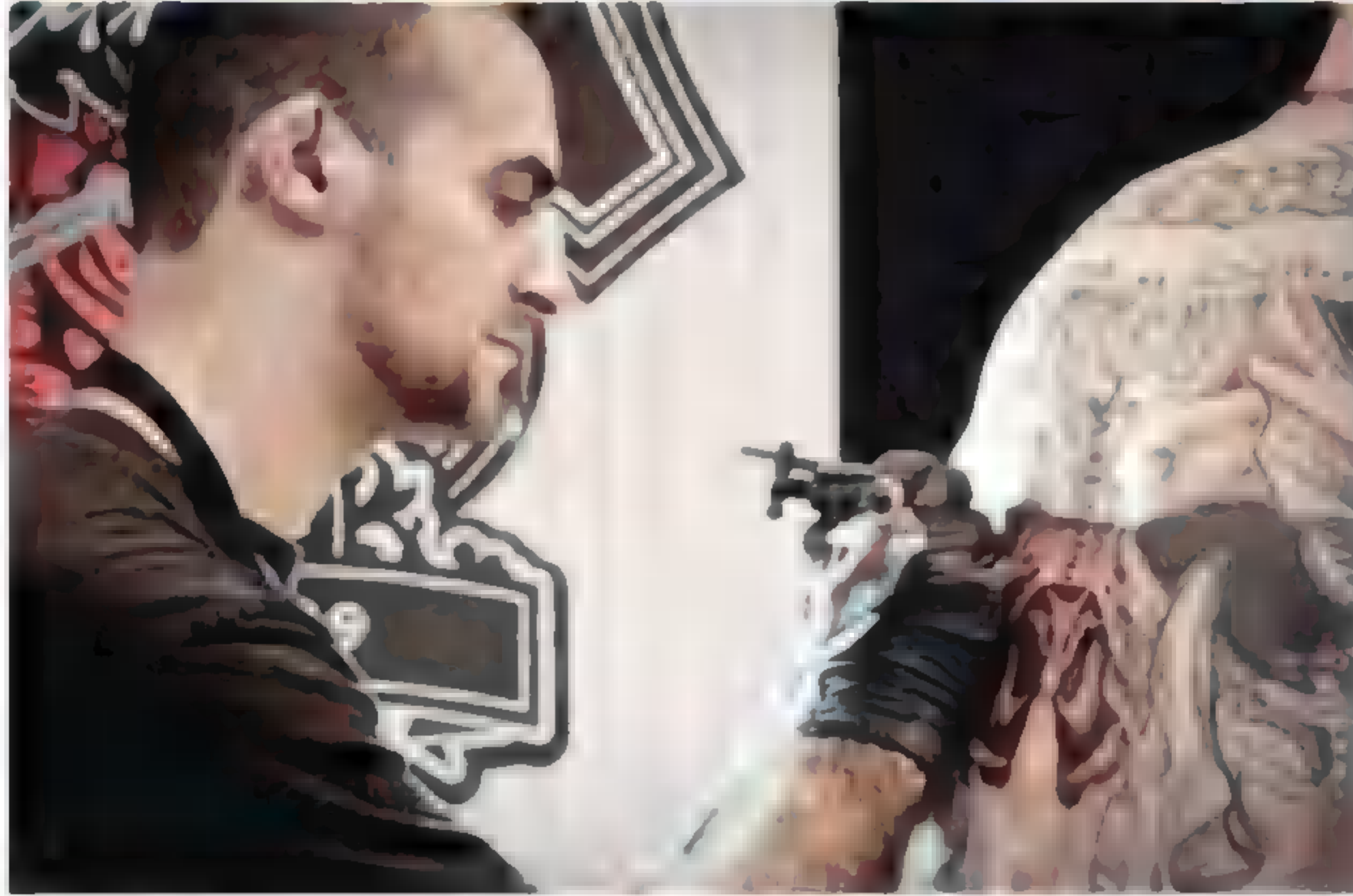
CONVENTION

PHOTOS BY FIONA CHAPMAN

# rites of passage

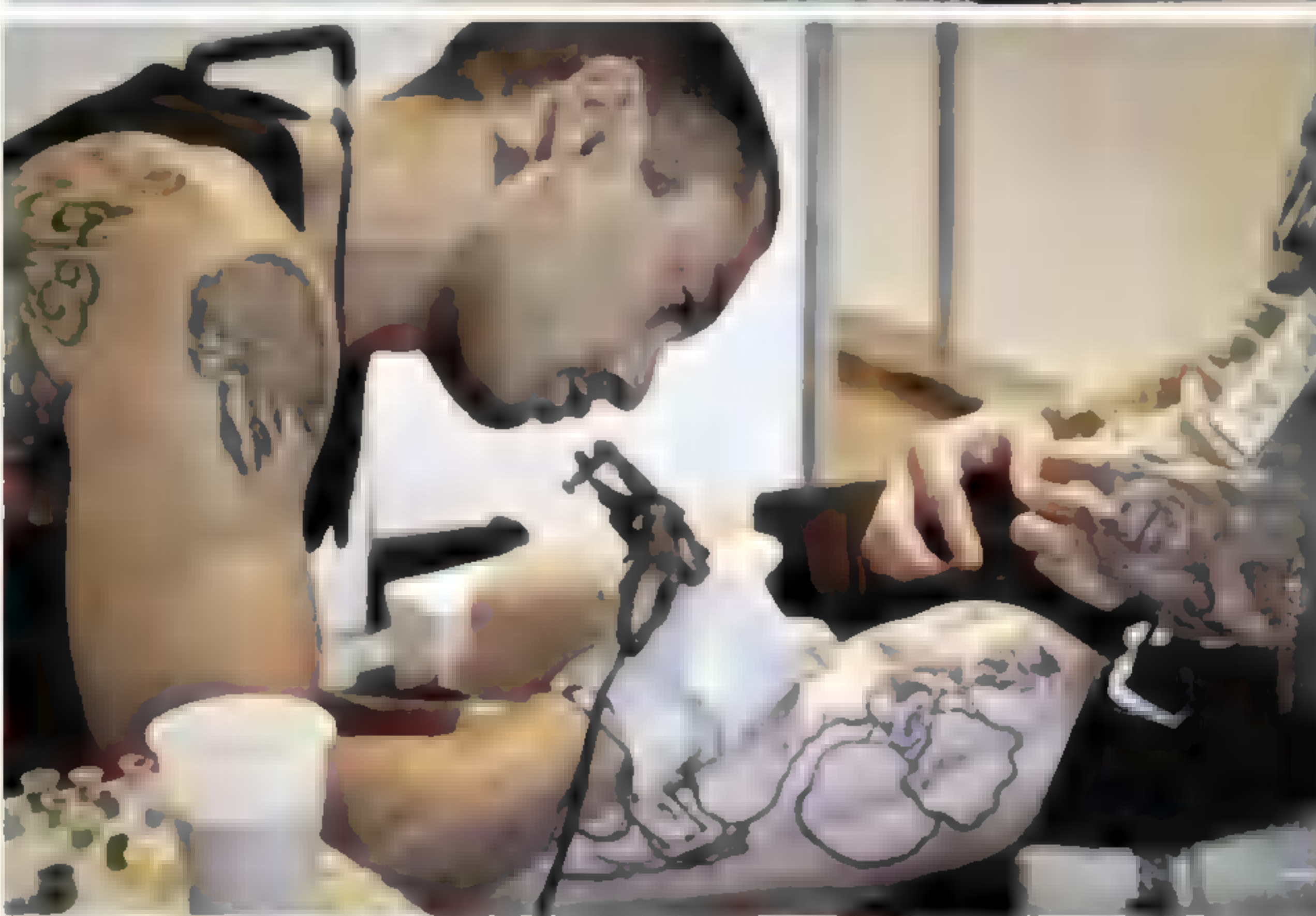
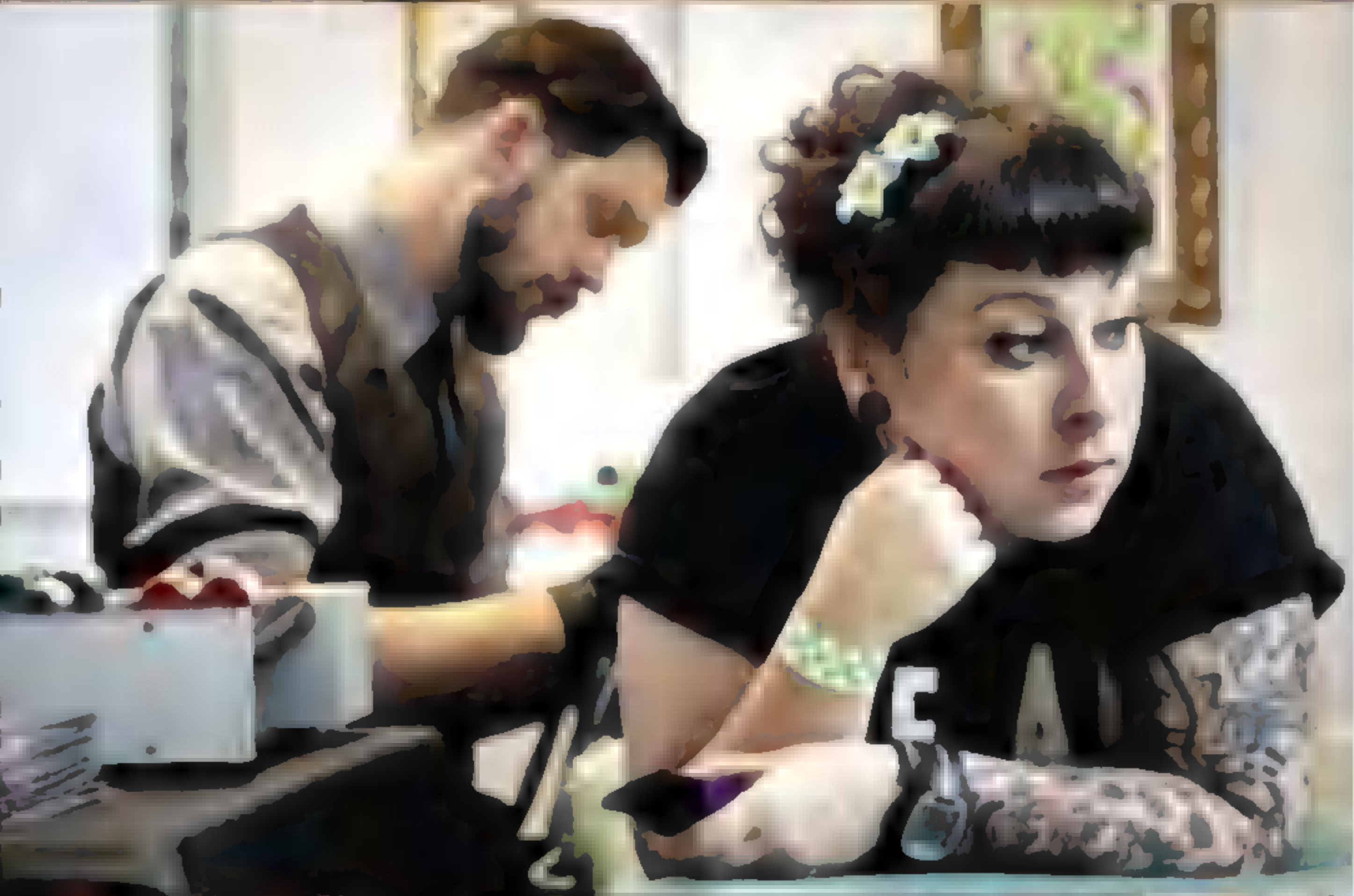
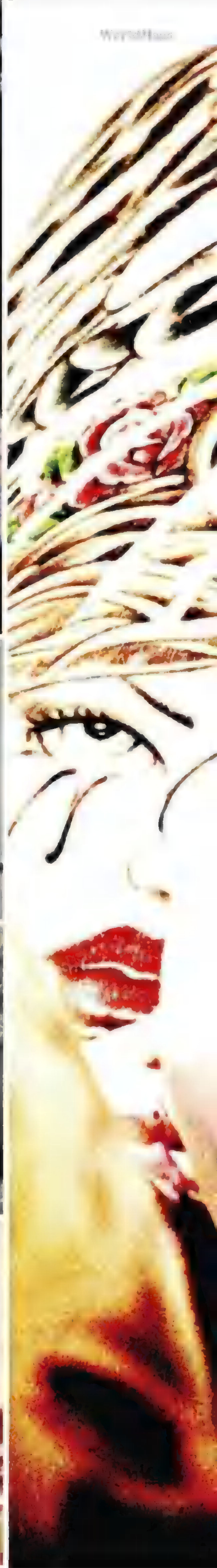
## TATTOO CONVENTION & ARTS FESTIVAL

*Melbourne, 28th-30th January 2011*



THE RITES OF PASSAGE EVENT WAS HELD IN MELBOURNE AT THE END OF JANUARY AT THE ROYAL EXHIBITION CENTRE. THIS CONVENTION IS AN EVENT THAT COVERS TATTOO ART, PHOTOGRAPHY AND PAINTING THAT ATTRACTED OVER 200 HUNDRED ARTISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD (INCLUDING JEFF GOGUE, CHAD KOEPLINGER, JO HARRISON, NICK BAXTER, DONG DONG, GEORGE MAVRIDIS AND MANY OTHERS) AND OFFERED A SERIES OF STYLES (TRIBAL, REALISTIC, BIO-MECHANICAL, NEW SCHOOL, ETC.) TO THE NUMEROUS VISITORS. BETWEEN THE PAINTINGS OF JASON JACENKO, ARAMAS AND MAGNUS MCTAVISH AND THE PHOTOGRAPHY SOLO SHOWS OF NICOLE REED AND TRAVELLIN' MICK, THE AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION CONTINUED FOR THREE LONG DAYS WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF ARTIST LUCKY DIAMOND RICH – THE MOST TATTOOED MAN IN THE WORLD! – THE VISITORS WERE ENTERTAINED BY DR SKETCHY'S BURLESQUE SHOW IN A REAL FESTIVAL OF ART, CULTURE (VERY POPULAR WERE THE TRADITIONS OF BORNEO, NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN AND SAMOA) AND NON-STOP MUSIC. AND THESE ARE THE PHOTOS THAT BRING US BACK TO THOSE HOT AUSTRALIAN DAYS...







25th-27th March 2011

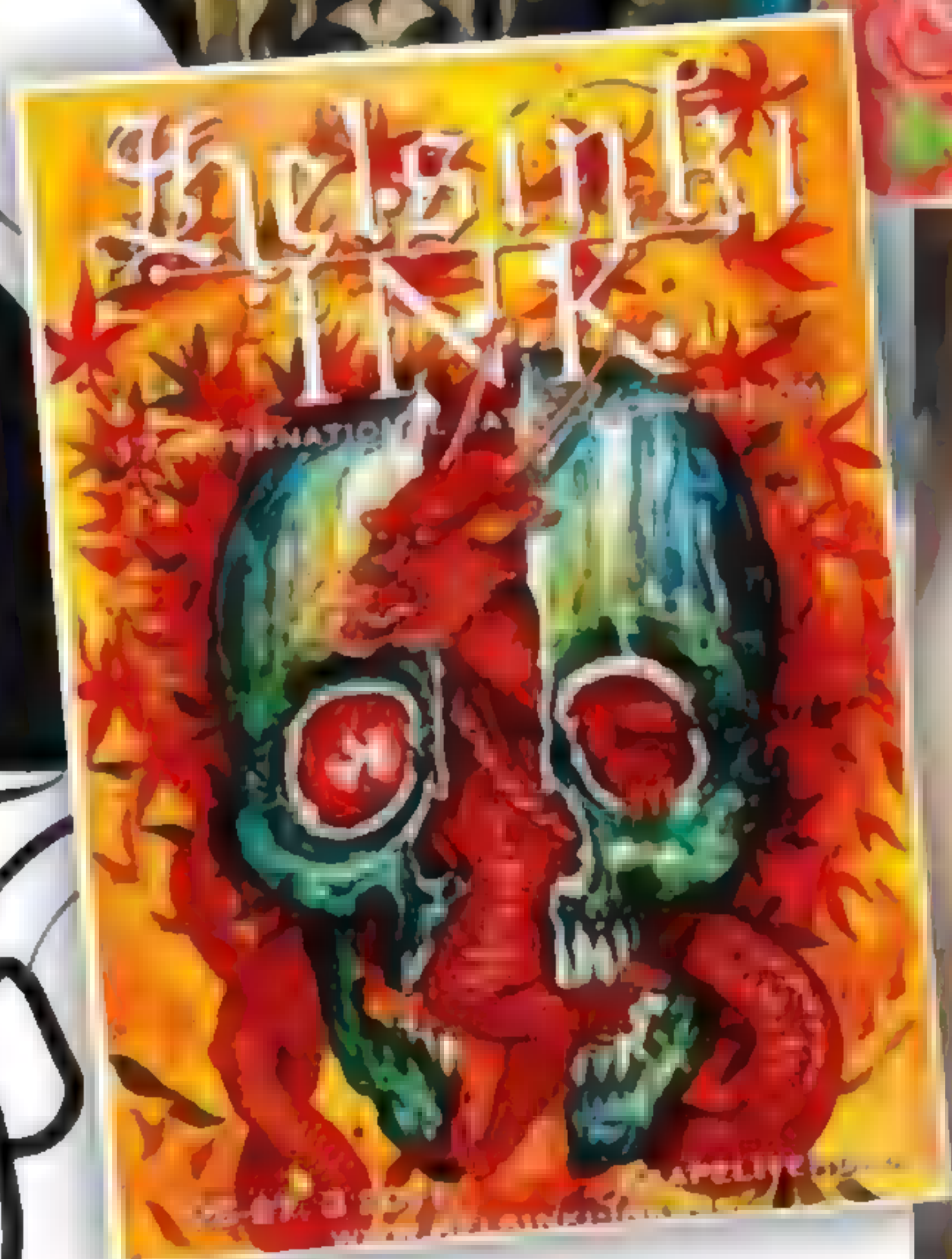
# HELSINKI INK

CONVENTION

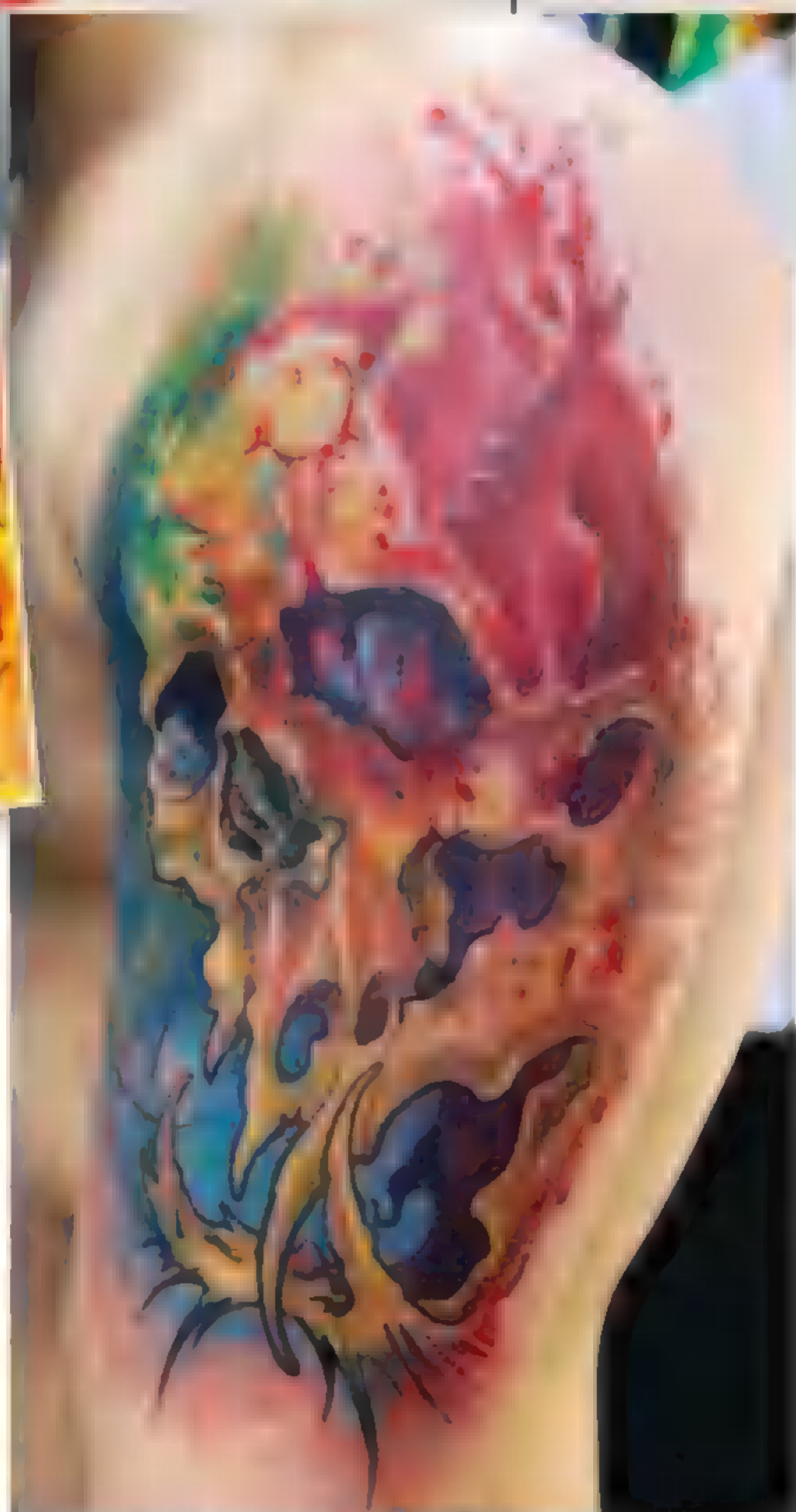
## INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY DAVID "DATS" RACANA  
[www.helsinki-ink.fi](http://www.helsinki-ink.fi)

DESTINATION FINLAND, TO DISCOVER THE 17<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF THE HELSINKI CONVENTION. GOT TO THE AIRPORT AND IT WAS SNOWING, AND IT'S COLD, JUST 2 DEGREES. WHEN I LEFT FROM GENEVA THERE WERE 18 DEGREES! THE LOCATION IS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT OF HELSINKI, IN THE SOUTH PART OF THE CITY, IN AN OLD RENOVATED WAREHOUSE TRANSFORMED INTO AN EXHIBITION HALL, ALL COVERED WITH THE FAMOUS RED BRICKS THAT RECALL THE ARCHITECTURE OF NEARBY RUSSIA...



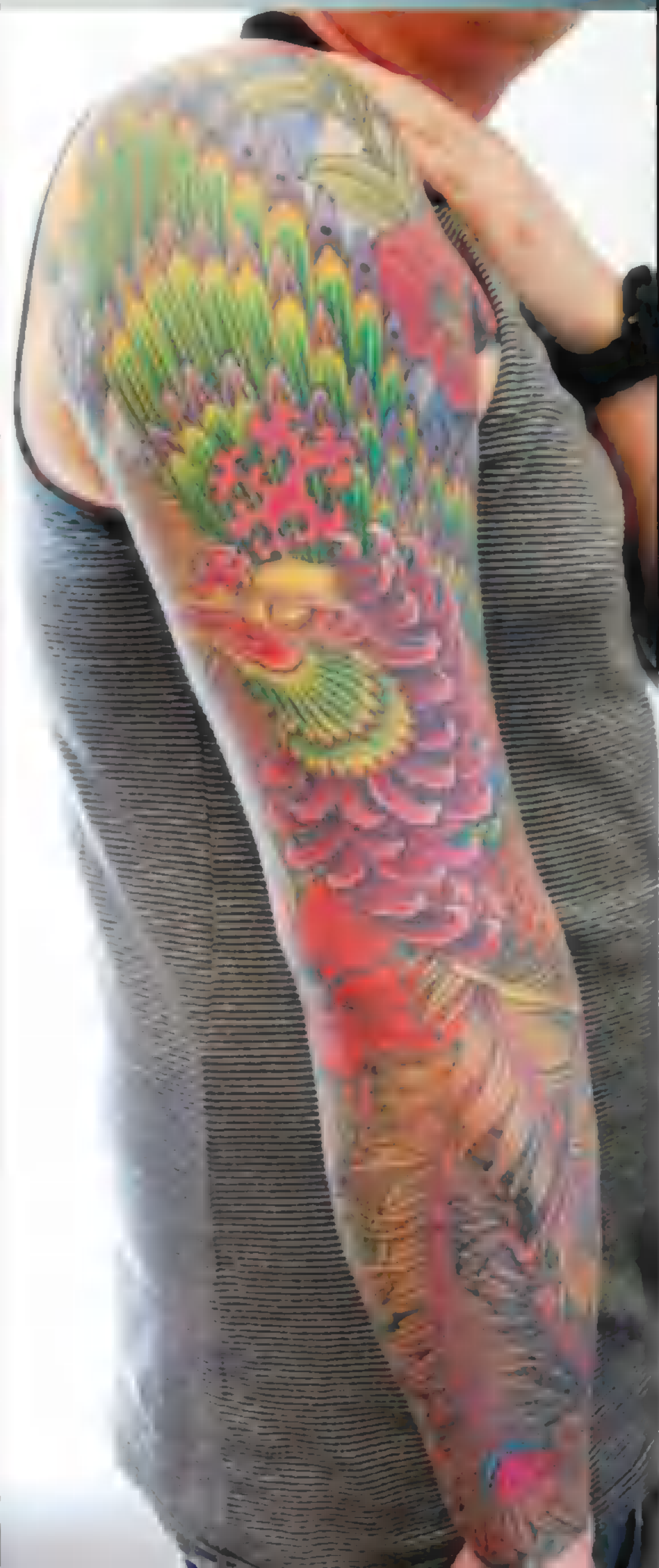
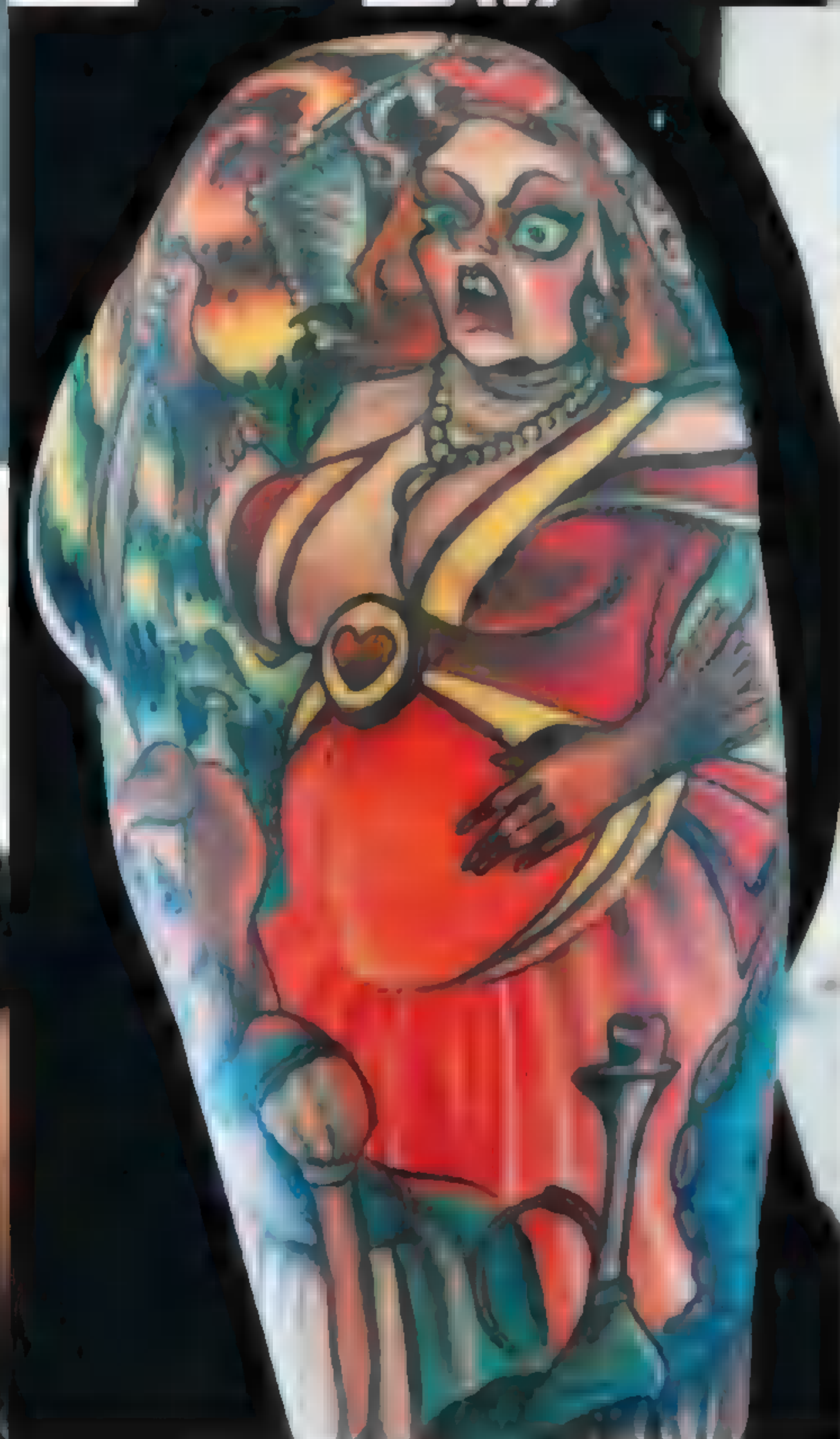
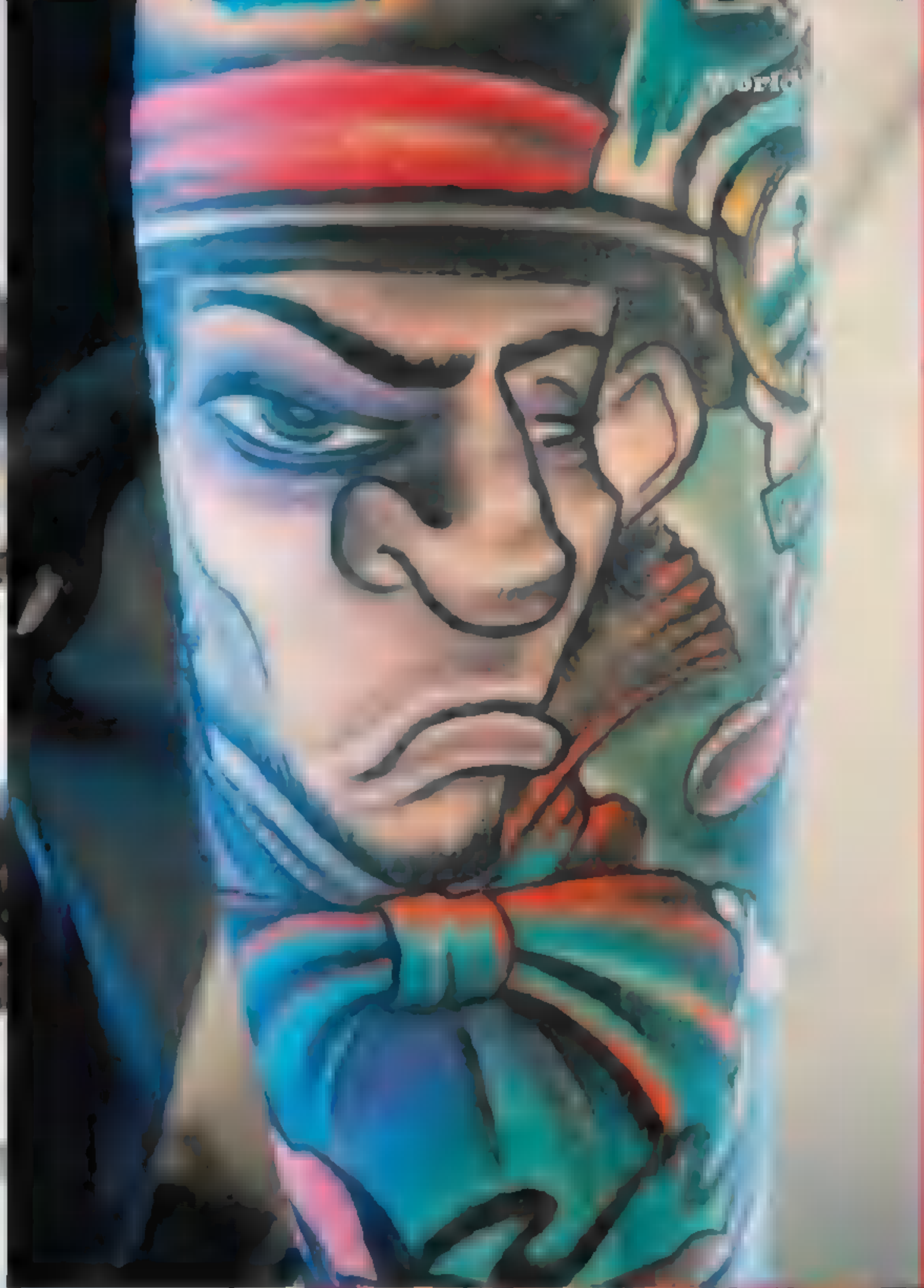
The convention opens to the public on Friday night at 6 pm and there is a surprise: the Finnish that made it to the convention are real tattoo enthusiasts! Original and creative works of art are displayed along the halls and the machines start to tick away inside the booths. The temperature rises, burlesque shows take the stage and the first contests draw the attention of the visitors. In the booths, many tattooists are busy working the day away: the





Finnish **Leena Lumilampi**, with a very female new-school universe; the Russian **Katerina Milly** of Bunker Tattoo, whose hyper-realistic flower compositions are really original (she won the Best of Day on Friday) and the French artist **Van's** (Tattoo Passion, Thonon, France), really popular among Finnish visitors who lined up to get her elegant and female designs!

As for the men, the star was without any doubt the Spanish artist **Maximo Lutz**, who won Best of Day on both Saturday and Sunday with hyper-realistic pieces with skulls. There was also space for more contemporary stuff: the Japanese Takami was overwhelmed with solidarity by all fellow tattooists after the terrible disaster that hit Japan on March 11. All visitors stood one minute in silence, and an auction was organized to help the people of Japan.



Finding yourself in the middle of a convention surrounded by the surreal silence of the people and machines was amazing: kudos to the organizers for this idea and also to the artists and visitors for taking part in such an initiative. Other fine artists at the convention included **Avishai Tene** of Ink Junkies, with his excellent Japanese style creations. Great times also for **Kups** (Fat Caps Tattoo, Caen, France), who almost won the Best of Day on Sunday with a very colored skull, based on a watercolor that he painted on Friday afternoon. An artist to keep an eye on who will certainly surprise us in the next few years!

As for the atmosphere, the Helsinki convention was pretty friendly: it's a place you can visit with your family, the organizers do a great job and the people really love the colored world of tattoos. But Finnish are very strict on certain things: the convention never stays open overtime, even if there are artists still ticking away on their machine when it is time to shut down! The security guys ask everybody to shut off the machines and given the size of those Vikings, nobody even tries to discuss the issue! No big deal: a bit of restriction can only do a convention good, from time to time! The tattooists and the organizers left the convention with a smile on their faces: the artists at the convention worked for the entire event and the visitors were really satisfied. In short: a convention to discover, not to mention Helsinki which is a great city, well worth the trip. Think about it for next year's 2012 edition!





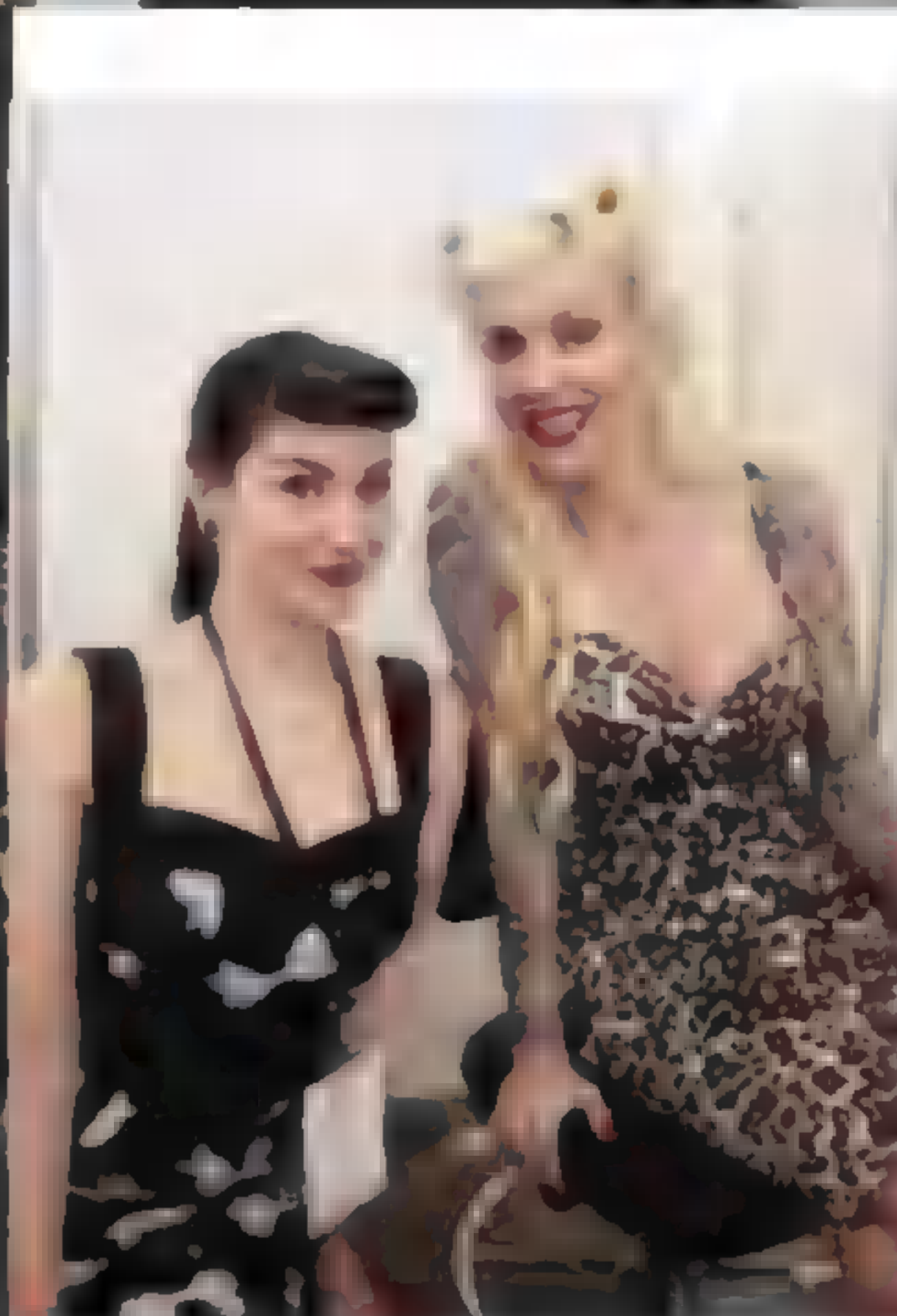
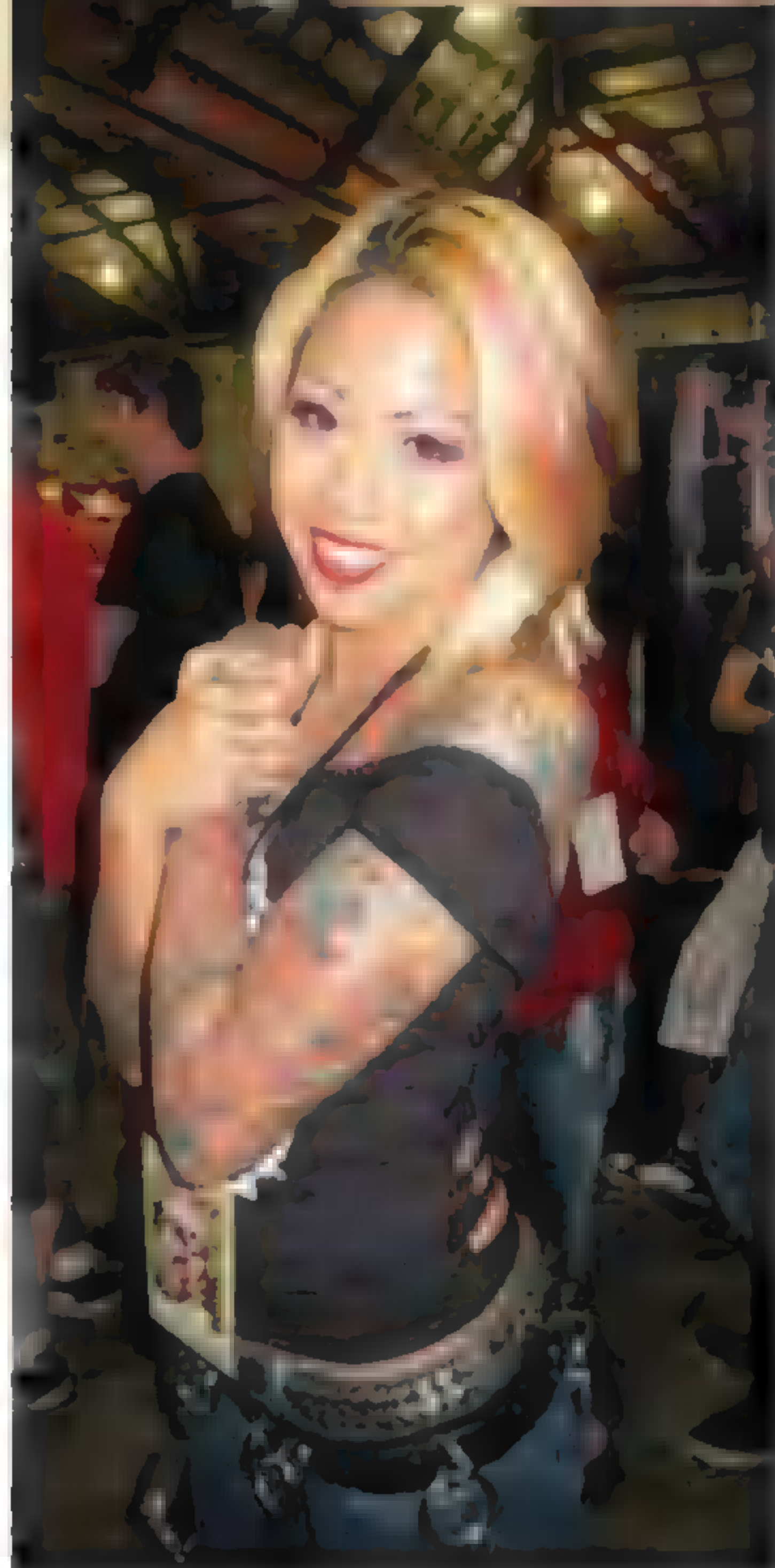
# 3<sup>RD</sup> CONVENTION SYDNEY TATTOO & BODY ART EXPO ARCH, 11<sup>TH</sup>-12<sup>TH</sup>-13<sup>TH</sup> 2011

TEXT BY FRANCESCA DE ANGELIS  
[www.tattooexpo.com.au](http://www.tattooexpo.com.au)

TWENTY-ONE HOURS TO GET THERE, 10 HOURS DIFFERENCE, OPPOSITE SEASONS, ONE OF THE LARGEST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD WITH VERY LITTLE POPULATION, ENDLESS SPACES AND DESERTS. ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR NATURAL AND BREATHTAKING SCENARIOS OF OUR PLANET, WITH A BIZARRE AND VARIED FLORA AND FAUNA. A LAND OF CHROMATIC AND ETHNICAL CONTRAST, A CROSSROADS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND DREAMS: ALL THIS AND MORE IS AUSTRALIA. AND TO MAKE IT EVEN BETTER WE ATTENDED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TATTOO CONVENTIONS OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY CONTINENT...



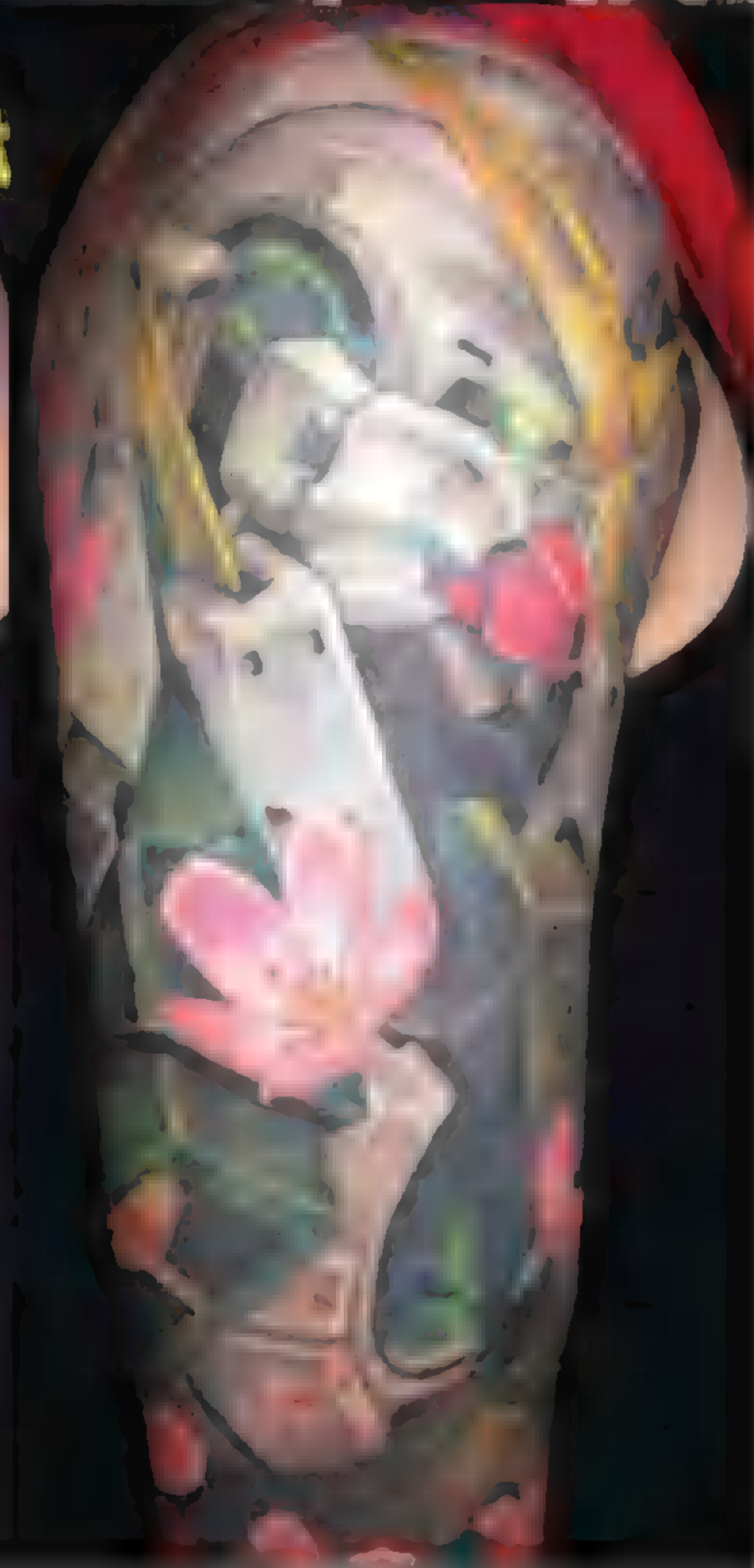
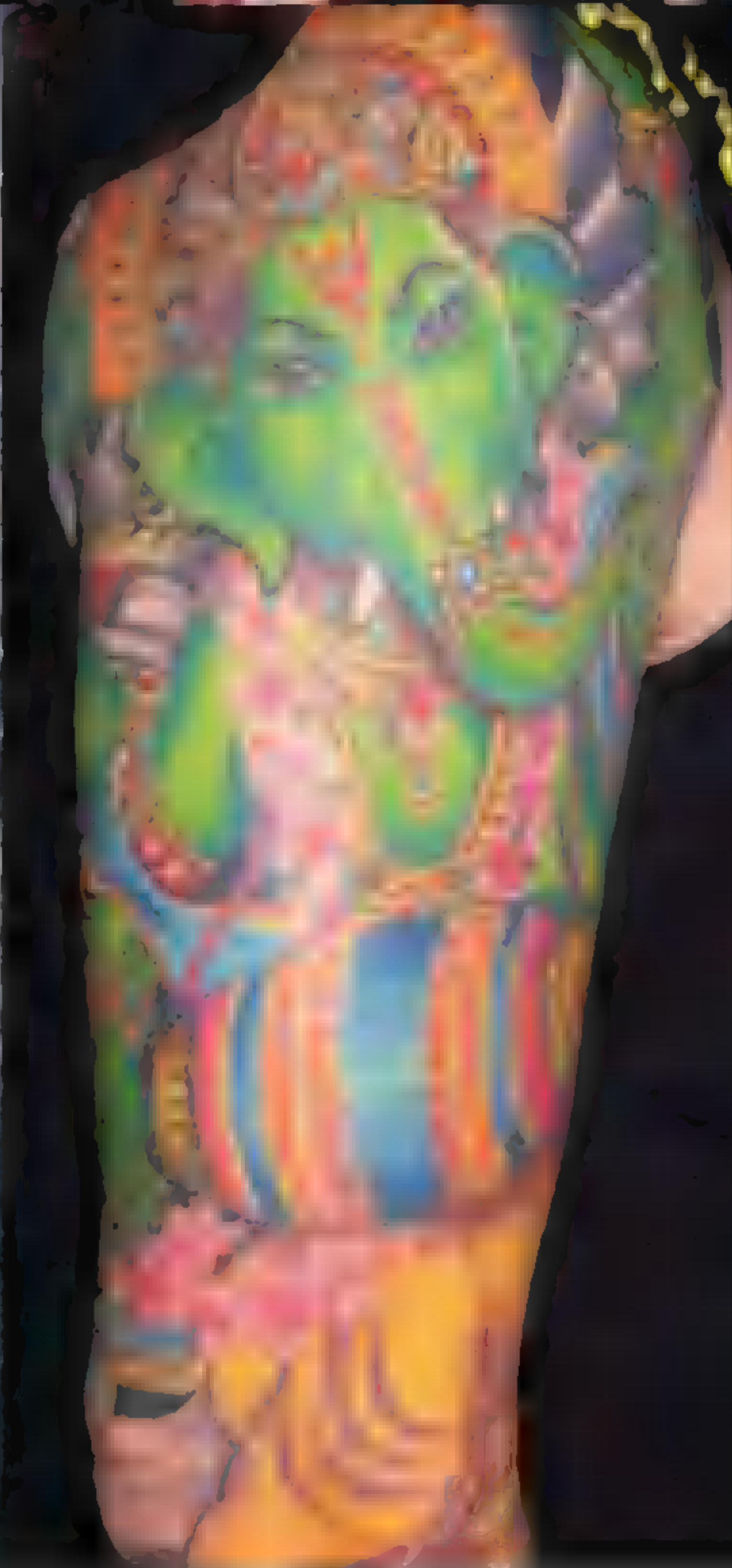
**W**ell then. An entire day travelling across the globe to get to that faraway land filled with expectations and imagination that are always fulfilled. So Sabrina Ink Lady and I (Francesca De Angelis from Pescara speaking here, author's note) we find ourselves thrown in one of the most beautiful cities in the world: Sidney, hectic city, but peacefully set along the wonderful bay where boats sail calmly behind the Opera House. On March 11 the third edition of the **Sidney Tattoo & Body Art Expo** took



place in the great location of the Olympic Park Showground. In the end there will be three busy days of work and events in two pavilions, one dedicated to the Vavoom Fest, fun rockabilly festival, which contributed to shake the atmosphere with concerts, vintage

clothing and accessories, hairdressers and custom-culture. The biggest convention of the Southern hemisphere surprised everybody this year, with fine artists and a rich entertainment program that made the international Sidney convention one of the fastest growing conventions in the tattoo world. Over 300 tattooists, live music,





burlesque dancers, fashion shows based on the 40's and 50's with the final of the pin-up girl Pageant. **Sabina Kelley** was one of the members of the jury.

The artists were able to offer their talent for a good cause: the works made by art fusion were sold at a public auction, just as the skateboards decorated by the tattooists. The proceeds of the event were donated to the Children's Cancer hospital. Probably we Europeans have a way of getting everywhere, we have great conventions all throughout our Continent, maybe even too many... Just think that in Australia, a country bigger than all of Europe, there are only three conventions a year! Anyway in Sidney you could really feel the excitement of who was waiting for this event for a whole year, like a kid waiting for Christmas; personally I saw customers leaving with two or three tattoos from the convention and I hadn't been so excited in years... From Italy besides me there were also **Sabrina Ink Lady**, **Enrico Ristori** of Indian Tattoo plus **Andrea**, **Bruno** and **Giorgio** of Pure Morning. There was also **Laura Scotton** even though where she comes from is more and more...a mystery!



Obviously, there were lots of Asian artists: from the colored and eccentric **Night Action Tattoo Crew** of Taiwan (and it's basically impossible to name them...) to **Hsu** of Lion King Tattoo passing from **Yang**, **Hua** and **Ching** of East Tattoo without forgetting the

fantastic **Sabado**, **Horitaka**, **Horitsuna** and, *last but not least*, the eccentric **Kowhey**. Of course the finest artists were there too **Chad Koeoplinger** of New York Adorned, and then, **Mike De Vries**, **Byron Drechsers**, **Mick Squires**, **Jason Stewart**, **Steve Soto** of Goodfellas, **Daniel Norin** from faraway Stockholm and **Swahili Bob's Tattoo**, **Craigy Lee**, the beautiful and talented **Jo Harrison**, the Spanish **Laura Juan** and from Belgium the amazing **Vincent Houquet** of Beautiful Freak Tattoo. A curiosity: there were no representatives from Polynesia but there were lots of artists from New Zealand, even though not typically Maori as we could expect in a place like this. And it is also difficult to name one without risking to forget somebody else, but what surprised me more was finding out how many unknown artists (at least for me) did some amazing tattoos, especially among the Australian artists. Thanks to the incredible racial and cultural variety of the territory, the Australian artists created an artistic mix that was really inspiring!



# COPENHAGEN INK FESTIVAL

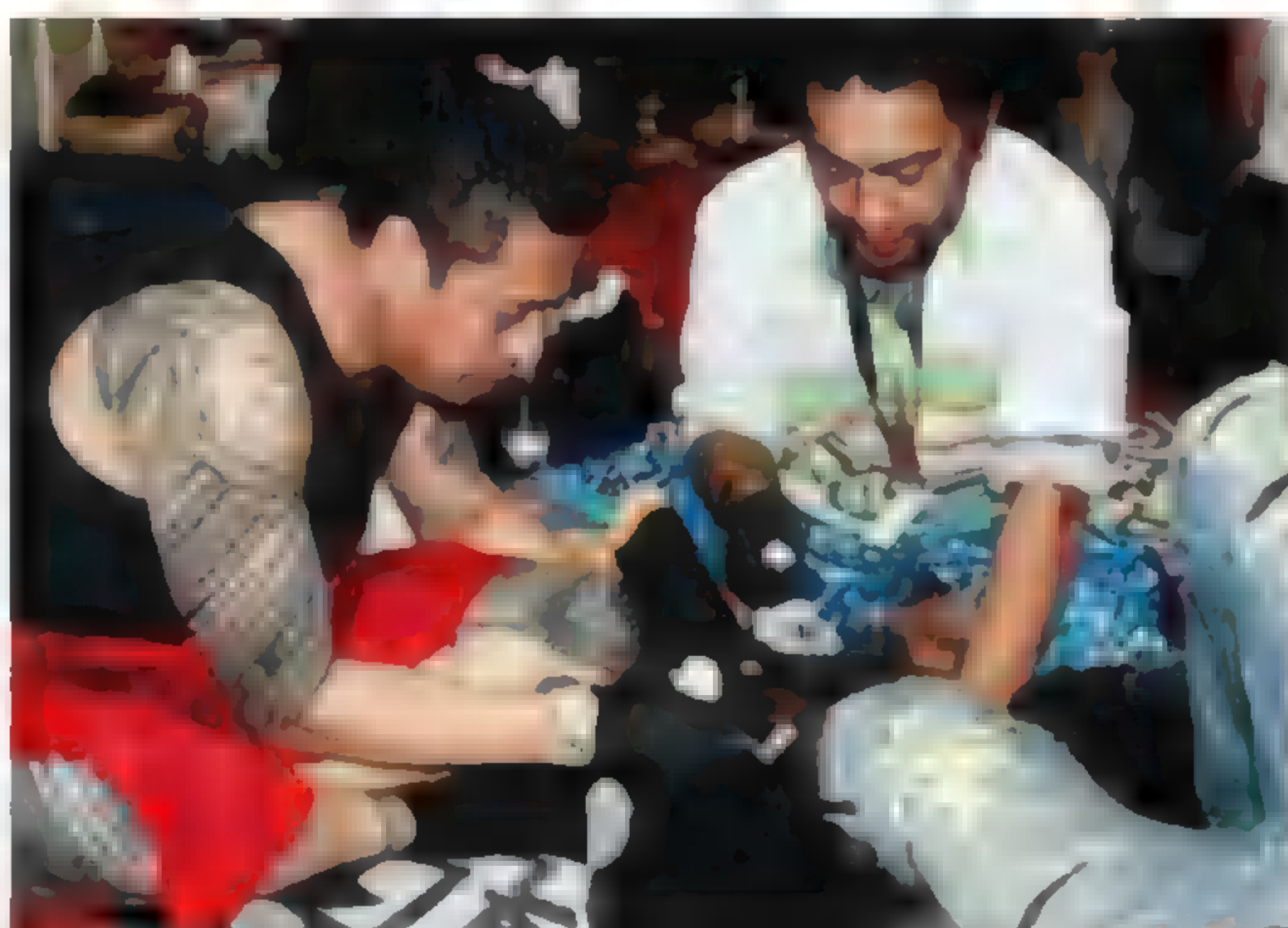


APRIL 1ST - 3RD  
2011

TEXT BY ROY MICUZZI  
Photos by Marcus Ewers

DENMARK AND ESPECIALLY ITS CAPITAL COPENHAGEN, HAVE ALWAYS HAD A STRONG TRADITION AS CONCERNS TATTOO ART. SO IT WAS A JUST THE CHERRY ON TOP OF THE CAKE THAT FACT THAT THE FAMOUS CITY OF THE MERMAID HOSTED THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AMAZING COPENHAGEN INK FESTIVAL. IN THE RENOVATED

OLD CARLSBERG BEER FACTORY (CAPACITY 8000 PEOPLE!), LOTS OF TATTOO ENTHUSIASTS GATHERED FOR A 3-DAY EVENT FILLED WITH FUN, COLOR AND NOISE, NOT TO MENTION THE FINEST 150 TATTOO ARTISTS IN THE WORLD. BEFORE LETTING THE IMAGES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHO WAS THERE AND THE MOST POPULAR STYLES...



**W**ell, yes, we can't of course mention them all, but let's take a look at who was there during the first edition of the Copenhagen Ink Festival. Horror tattoos, for example, were represented by the amazing **Bob Tyrrell** of Night Gallery in Detroit, by **Maximo Lutz**, by **Benjamin Moss & Jack** of

Apocalypse Tattoo, by the Spanish **Victor I. Policheri** of VIP Tattoo, by the Dutch **Thomas Kynst** of the studio by the same name in Deventer, by **Mojo** of Mojo Tattoo, **Boris, Robert Hernandez** of Vittamin Tattoo and, *last but not least*, by the Italian **Pino Cafaro** who was ever more at ease amongst his disturbing creatures that take inspiration from Japanese art.

The ever popular traditional style, for the entire convention was dominated

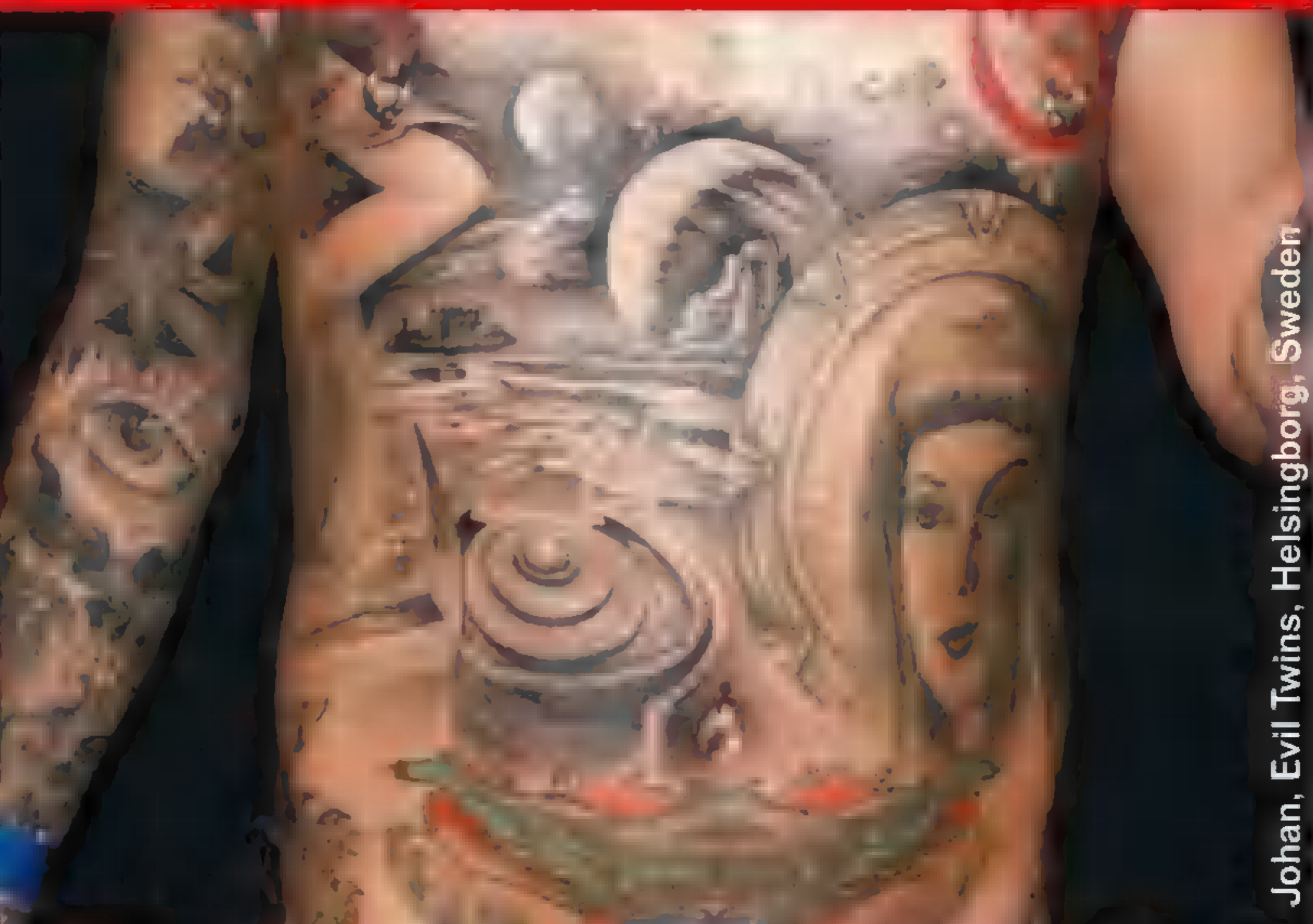
Eva Schatz, Naked trust, Salzburg, Austria



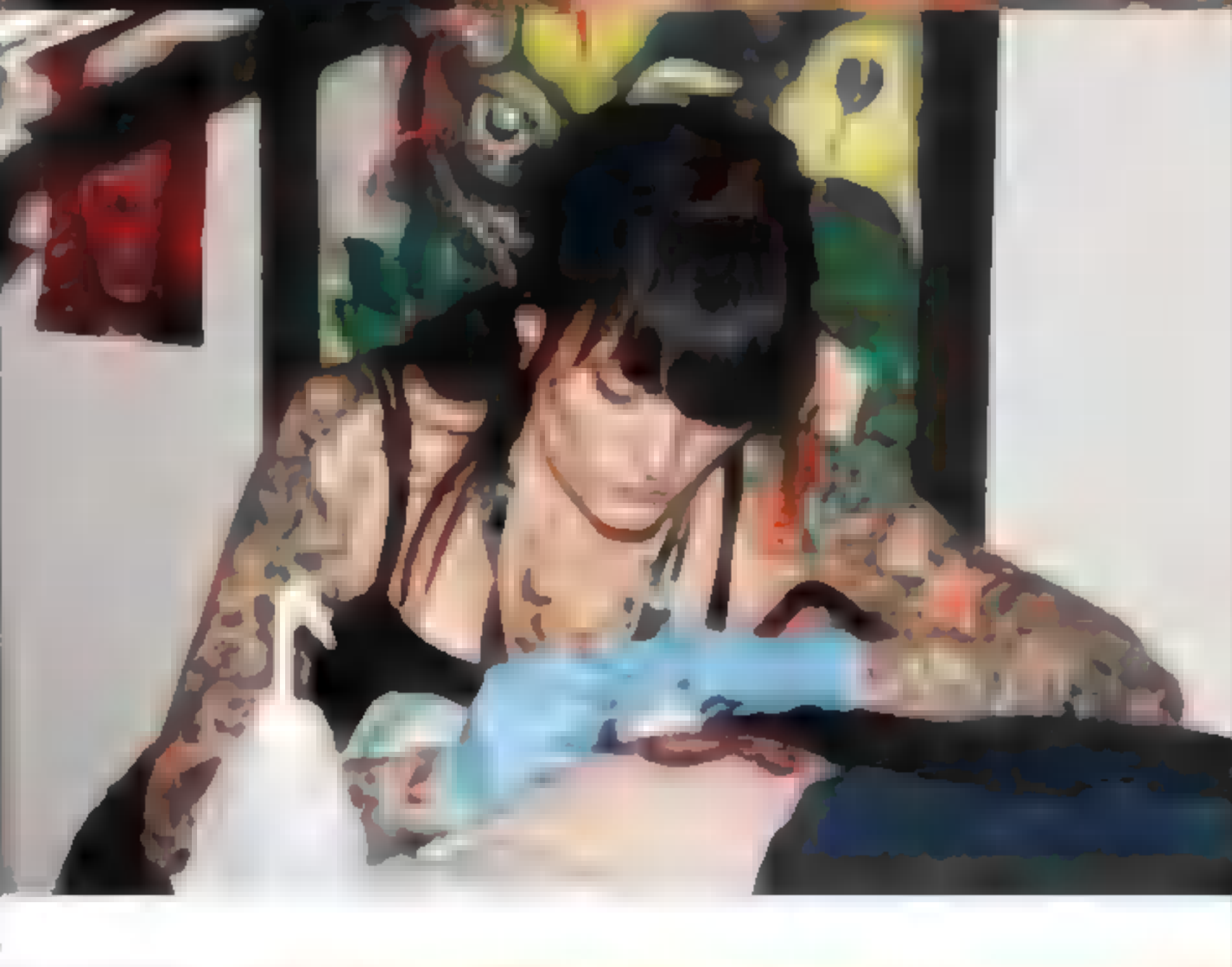
Best of saturday by Jason Butcher







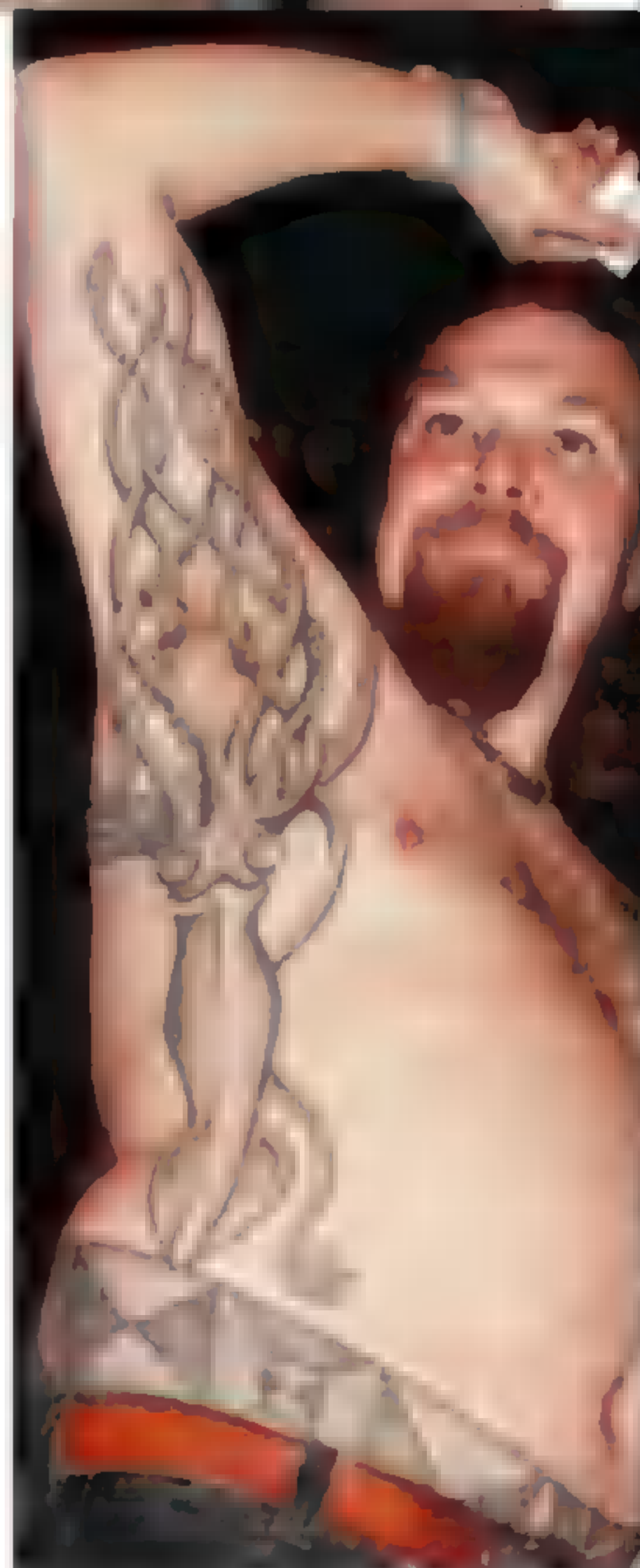
Johan, Evil Twins, Helsingborg, Sweden



Martin, Baby Lou, Copenhagen

by the British artist **Steve Hartnoll** of Tattooz, **Drew Horner** of Living Art Tattoo, by **Phil Kyle** (along with Inma) of Magnum Opus Tattoo, **Deno** of Circus Tattoo and **Seth Ciferri**. Real explosions of color came from Joe Capobianco of Hope Galery while the Canadian **Safwan** of Imago Studio surprised all the participants of the Ink Festival with his amazing skulls, filled with pathos, elegance and intensity.

Also the realistic style stood out in Copenhagen thanks to the works of **Randy** of Heaven Of Colours, of **George Mauridis** of Tattooligans, **Jason Butcher** of Immortal Ink,



George Mauridis, Greek



Carl, Wicked Tallon, Gotheborg, Sweden





# COPENHAGEN

## INK FESTIVAL

APRIL 1ST - 3RD  
2011

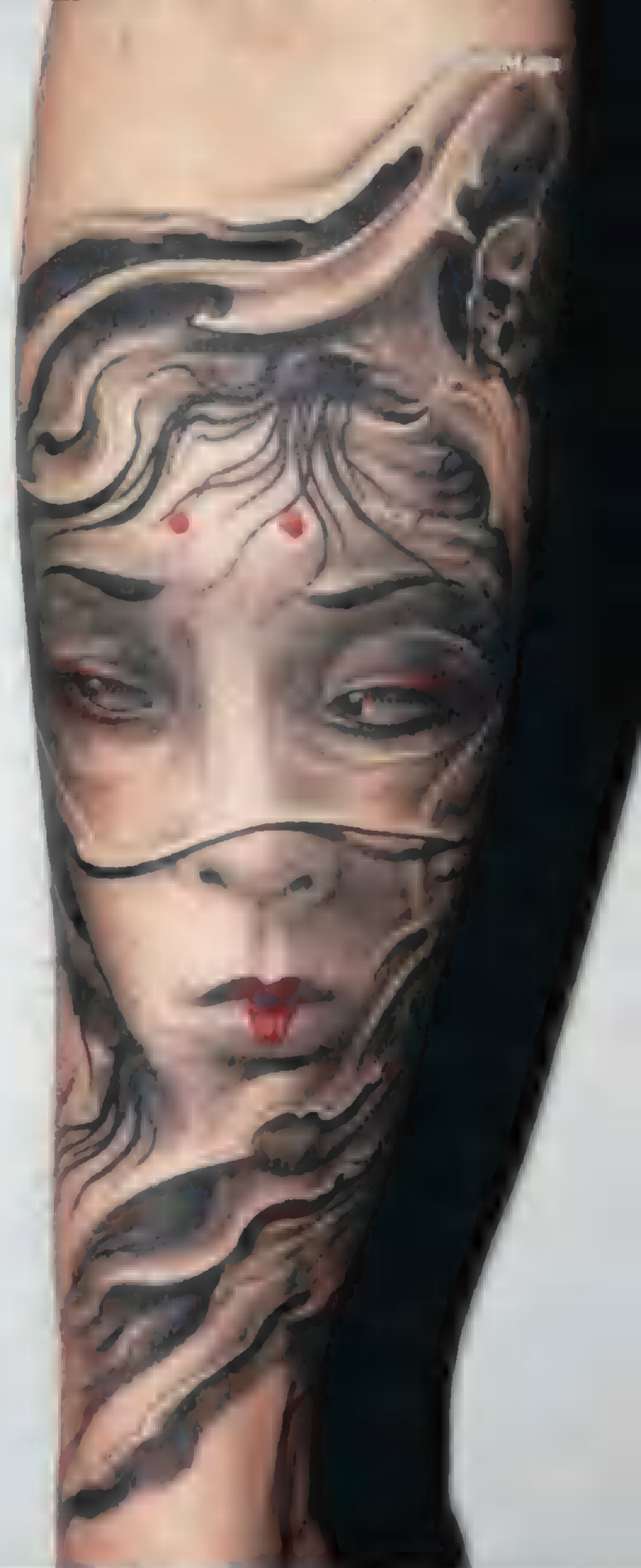


**John Montgomery** of Gran Tattoo Lodge, of **Heidi Hay** (along with **Niki Norberg** and **Ed Perdomo**) of Heidi Hay Tattoos, **Jo Harrison** of Modern Body Art and of the super precise **Andy Engel** of Andy's Tattoo & Piercing Studio, who just published a great didactic DVD. Even the German couple **Volko** and **Simone** of the Buena Vista Tattoo Club were buzzing away with their machines working on their very personal style that they call "Realistic Trash Polka". And the Japanese influences? Well, talking about Japanese artists, we must mention the great **Henning**

**Jorgensen** of Royal Tattoo who was basically working at home, **Takami** of Knockover and the Italian **Vlady** of Positive Vibrations.

The same goes for the Chicano style properly represented by **Boog** and **Carlos Torres** whereas the tribal style was simply enhanced and enriched by the pieces of the New Zealand artist **Brent McCown** of Tattoo Tatau and another master, the Danish **Jorgen Kristansen** of Mjølner Tattoo who is also an expert of the symbols of the ancient Viking and Nordic tradition in general. All in all, the Copenhagen Ink Festival exceeded all expectations and everybody is already waiting for the 2010 edition. For all those who love the most eclectic and genuine tattoo art.

Victor Portugal, Poland



Alto, Creative Tattoo, Belgium



Dennis, Spectrum Art, Denmark



Randy, Heaven of Colours, Zwickau, Germany





Anabi, Anabi tattoo, Stettin



Johan, Evil Twins, Helsingborg, Sweden



Johan, Evil Twins, Helsingborg, Sweden



CONVENTION

Pablo, Klassik Tatuering, Sweden



Buri, Eaststreet Tattoo, Stockholm, Denmark



Jens, Heavenly, Link, Sweden



**ARE YOU A PROFESSIONAL TATTOO ARTIST?**  
**ARE YOU A TATTOO ENTHUSIAST?**



# TATTOO LIFE GALLERY

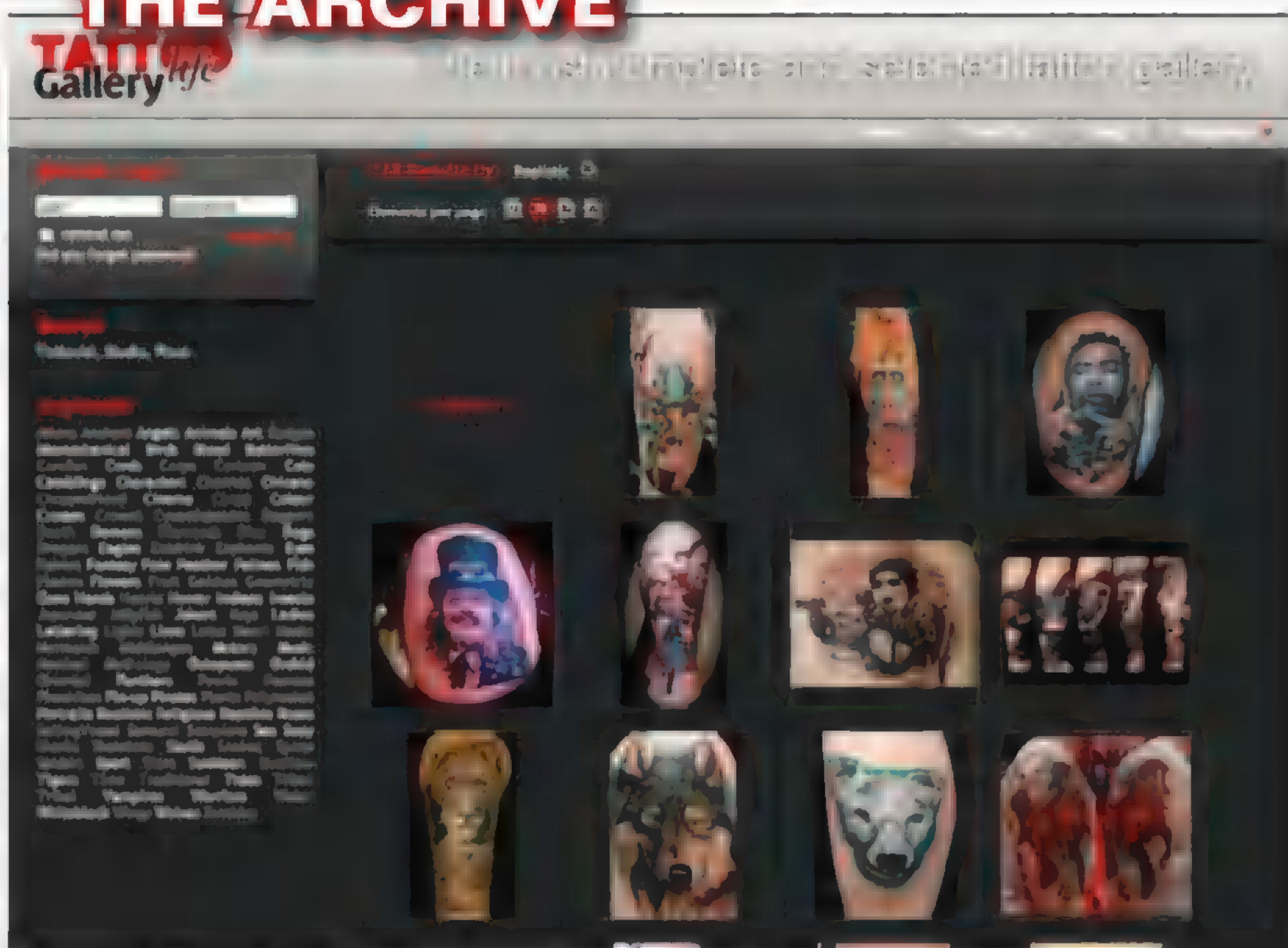
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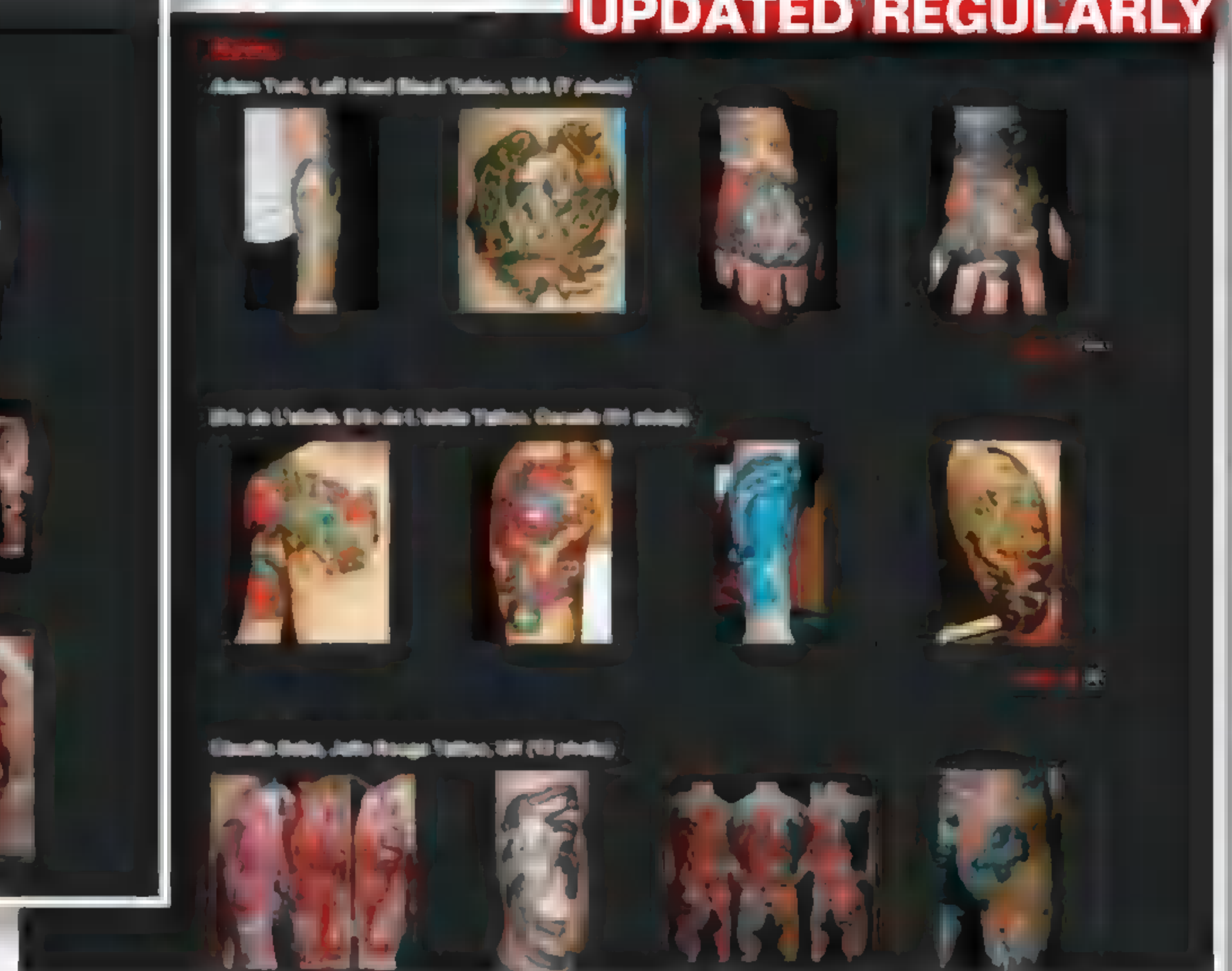
## SEARCH THE ARCHIVE

TATTOO  
Gallery



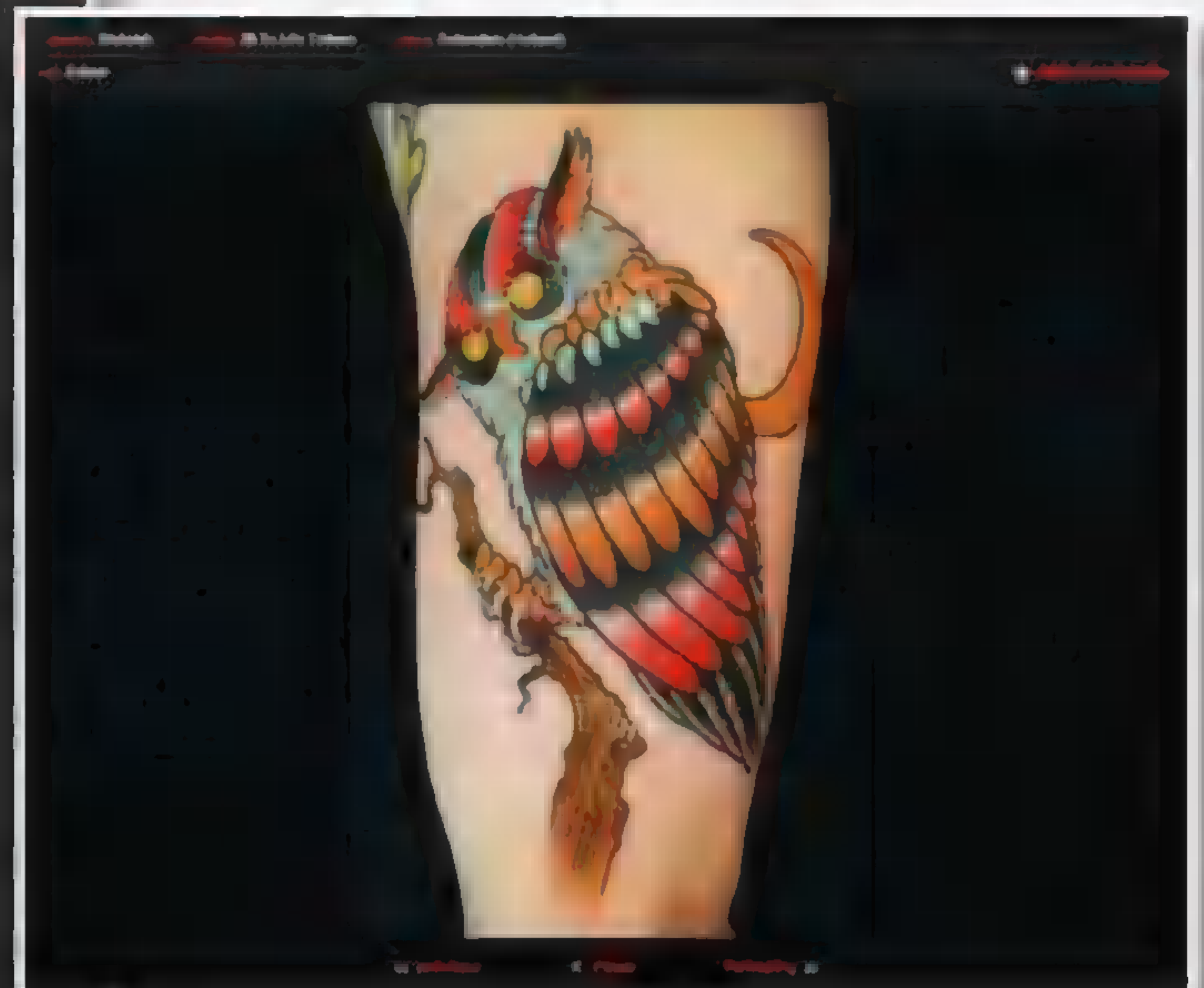
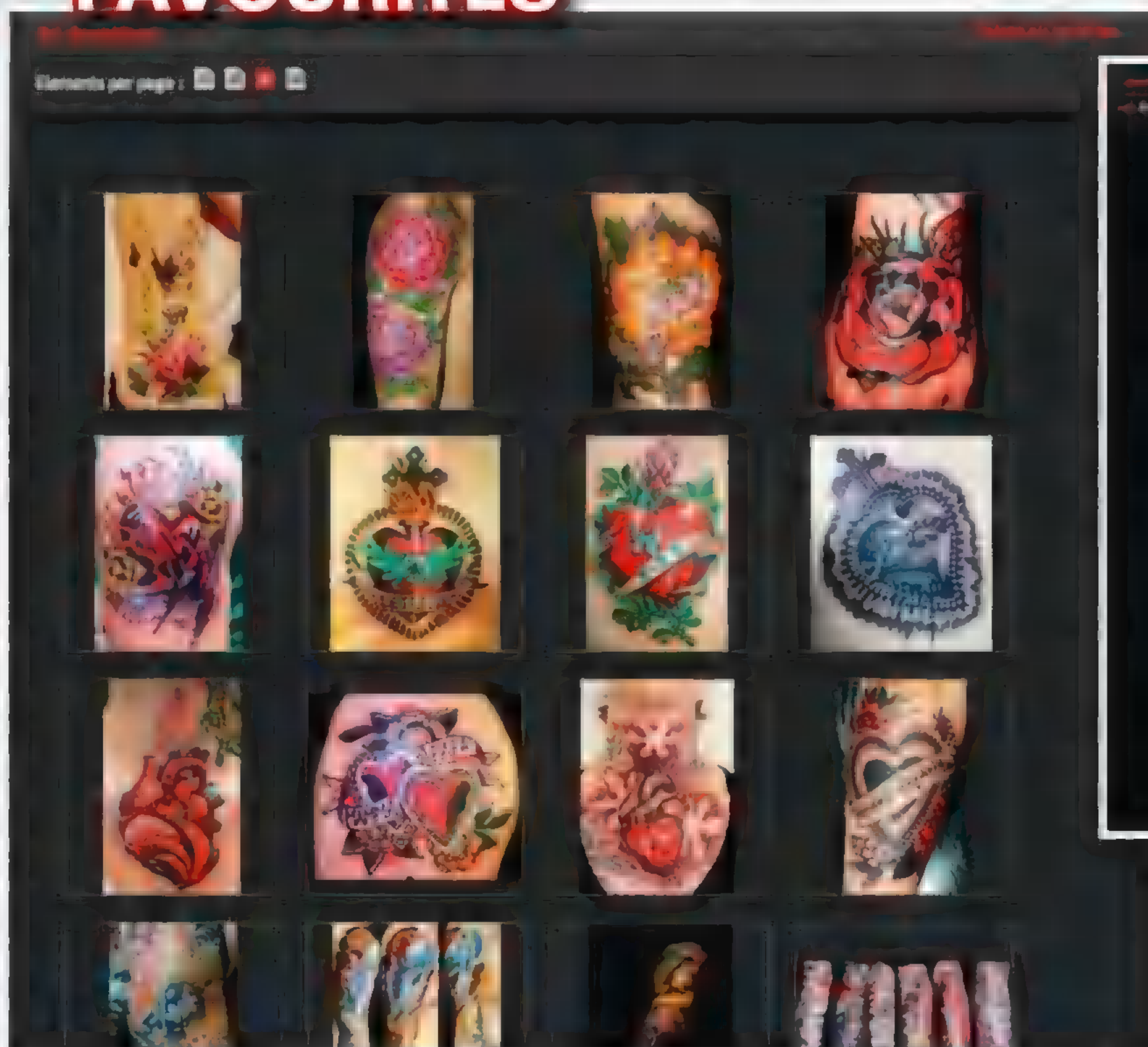
DO YOU WANT A NEW TATTOO? OR A CUSTOMER WANTS A NEW TATTOO AND YOU NEED SOME FRESH IDEAS, SUBJECTS AND DIFFERENT STYLES? SEARCH THROUGH OUR ARCHIVE USING KEY WORDS THAT WILL HELP YOU FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH THE DIFFERENT SUBJECTS AND STYLES, OR SEARCH BY ARTIST AND COUNTRY AND CHECK OUT THE WORKS OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTIST. TATTOO LIFE

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# TAS

TATTOO ARTIST

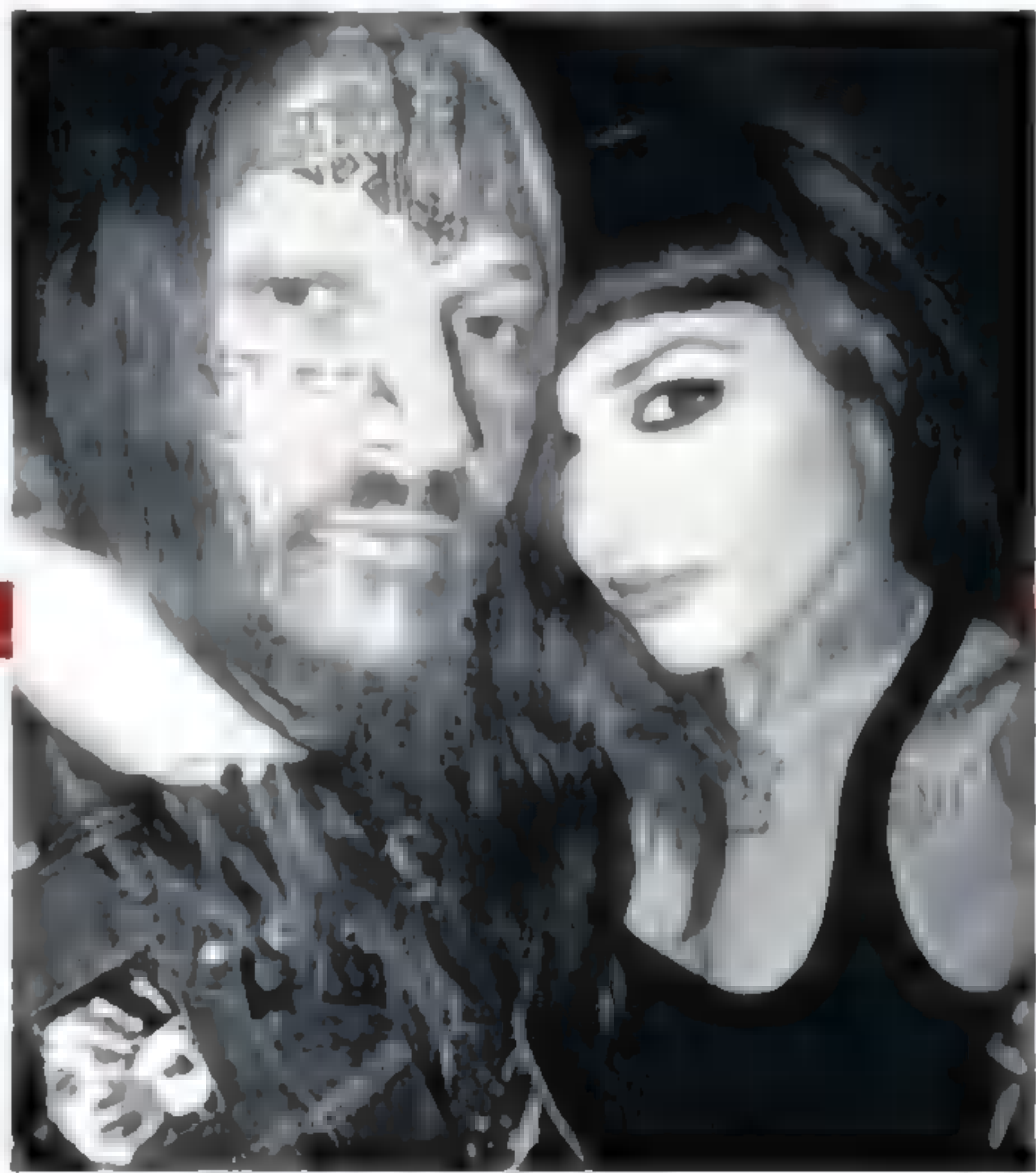
# THE TATTOO WIZARD

TEXT BY JONDIX

BORN IN GREECE IN THE 70'S LIKE HIS TEACHER MIKE "THE ATHENS", TAS HAS WORKED IN CYPRUS, BELGIUM, SPAIN AND HE'S NOW PUTTING HIS TALENT ALONGSIDE ALEX BINNIE AND DUNCAN X AT THE MYTHICAL STUDIO INTO YOU IN LONDON. HE IS ALSO THE BASS PLAYER FOR ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS HEAVY ROCK BANDS OF THE WORLD AT THE MOMENT, ELECTRIC WIZARD.







## TATTOO ARTIST

**F**OR HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TATTOOING SO FAR? AND WHAT WOULD YOU DETERMINE AS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT CAREER BREAKING POINT AND WHY?

I have been in tattooing since I was 21 so it's been 18 years now I guess... I think my career breaking moment was when Mike told me for the first time: that's pretty good you know. hahaha. He's very strict...

**NOW THAT YOU ARE ON THE COVER OF THE BEST HARD ROCK MAGAZINES IN THE WORLD, WE ARE AFRAID THAT YOU WILL END UP QUITTING TATTOOING IN A FEW YEARS. IS THIS QUITE A POSSIBILITY?**

No, never. My love for tattooing is endless and I can quit right now and be fine, but I don't want to. I will do it till the day I die. Mind you playing in a band is really hard work. You have to practice constantly, wake up always early and travel like a maniac, carry heavy amps up and down, play shows and all that with an infernal hangover....or drunk. Tattooing is easy...

**YEARS AGO YOU WERE KNOWN FOR YOUR BORNEO TRIBAL WORK. I REMEMBER YOU HAD MANY PORTFOLIOS WITH HUNDREDS OF PICTURES WITH SOLID BLACK WORK. DO YOU THINK YOU COULD GO BACK TO THOSE TIMES AGAIN IN THE FUTURE?**



Oh my God, I hope not!!!!. Tribal is really hard work as everyone knows but I have to admit I especially love Borneo designs. At the shop Chris Higgins is doing all the tribal work. He's brilliant. I won't say no though to a Borneo throat piece if someone asks me. I've done many. It's like a headhunter trophy!

**DO YOU THINK THAT YOU FOUND MIKE THE ATHENS BY CHANCE AND THAT HE PLANTED THE SEED IN YOUR MIND OR MAYBE HE FOUND YOU? TRY TO EXPLAIN TO THE YOUNGER GENERATION HOW IMPORTANT YOUR RELATION MASTER-APPRENTICE WAS.**

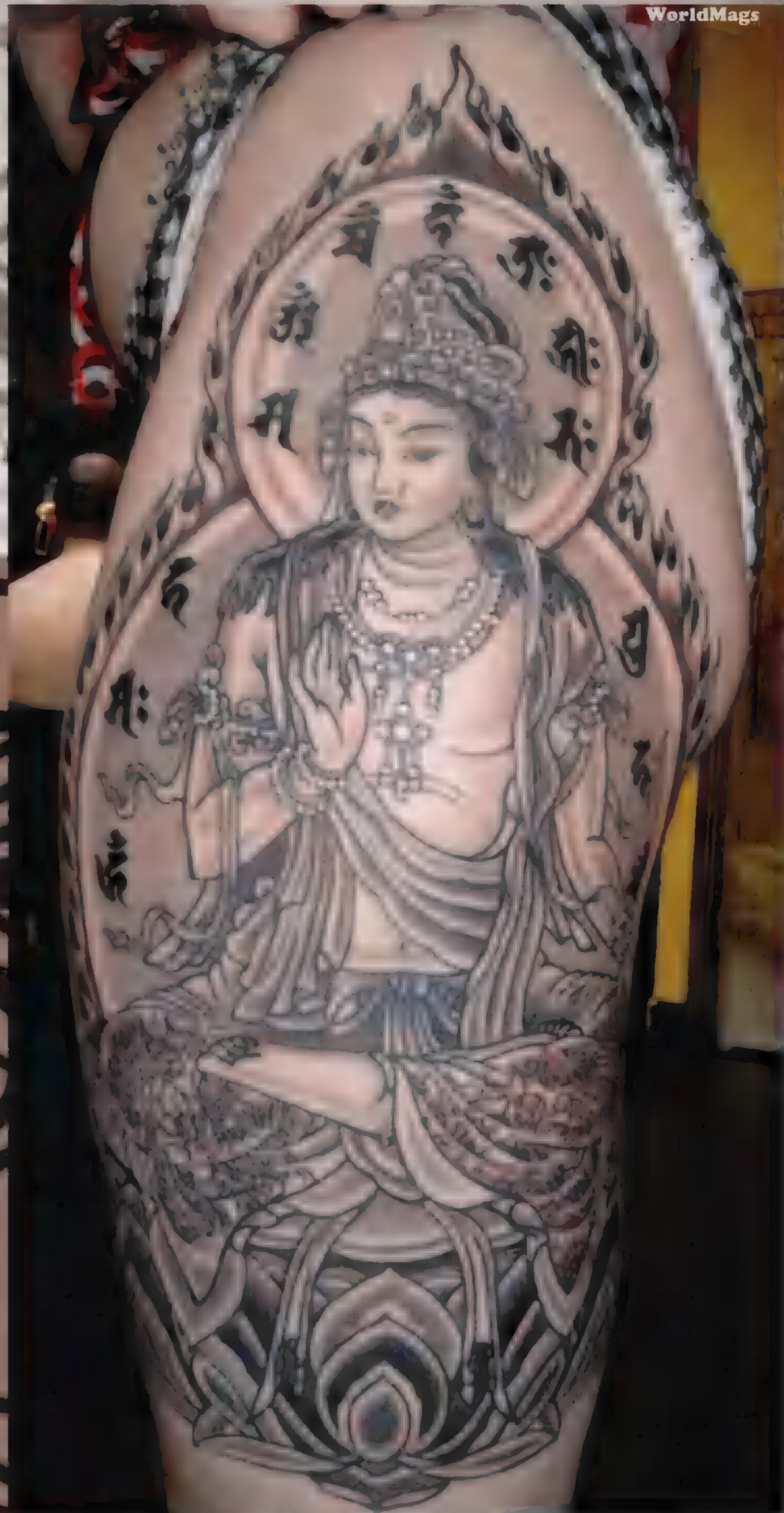
I met Mike as a client and he tattooed me a lot. Then one day to my surprise he asked me to be his

apprentice cause he knew that I was drawing since I was a child. I would have never started tattooing without an apprenticeship. This relationship was and still is great. I'm still his apprentice you know, he always tells me off and this is how I become better. Being an apprentice also made me humble and patient. He is an incredible artist and I owe everything to him.

**IN THE 90'S YOU KIND OF INVENTED THE TRIBAL MIXTURE OF THAI, BORNEO AND POLYNESIAN THAT IS STILL BIG NOWADAYS. DO YOU STILL ENJOY IT NOW?**

No, Alex Binnie invented it, I merely copy it. Hahaha. I don't do much of it now, you do it waaaaay better.



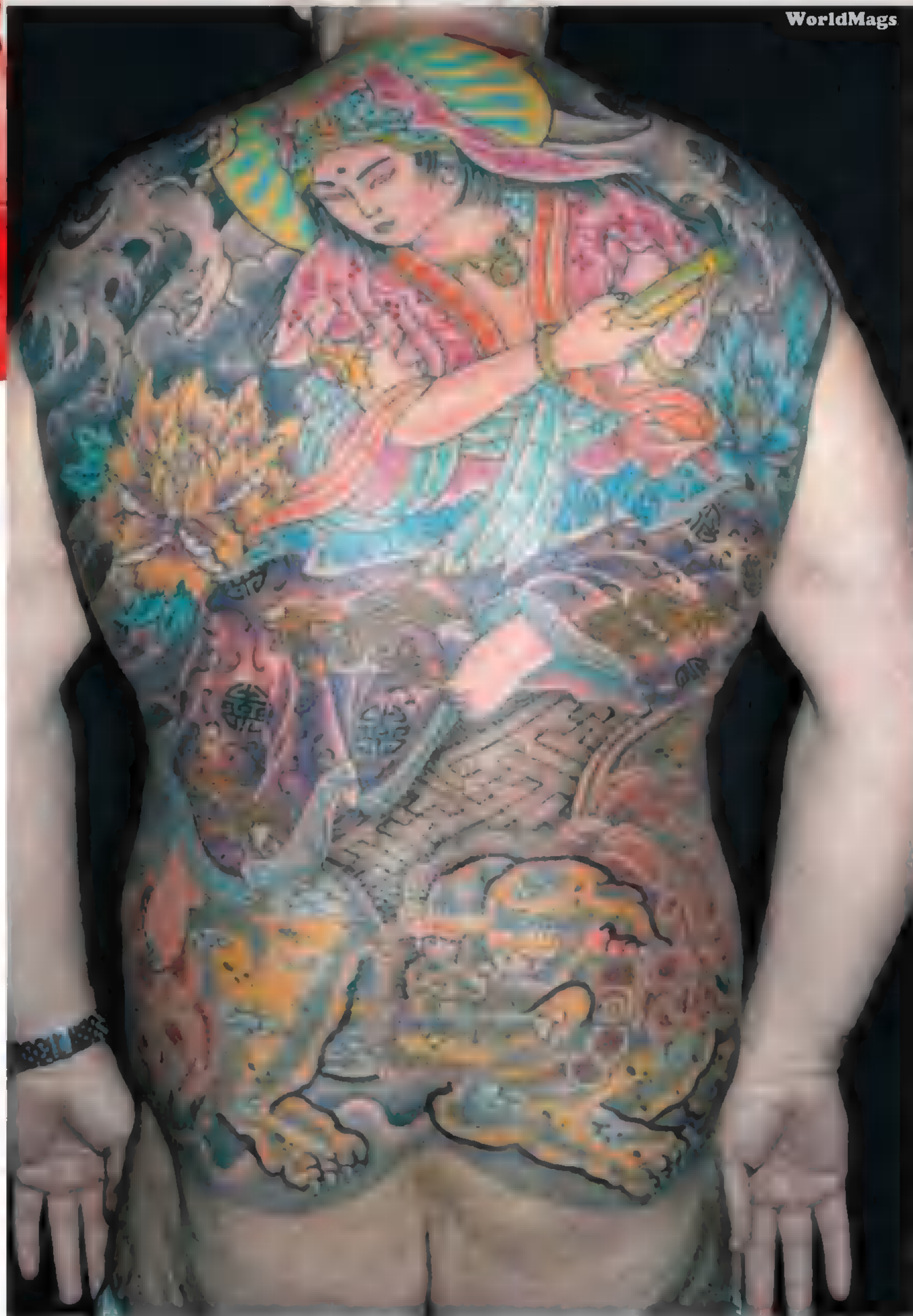


**THE JAPANESE STYLE THAT YOU MAINLY DO LATELY HAS GOT SOME ANTIQUE QUALITIES. HOW DID YOU END UP DOING JAPANESE TATTOOS AND WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE FROM OTHER EUROPEAN JAPANESE TATTOOS?** Since I started I was only interested in tribal and oriental work and I tattooed Japanese stuff years and years ago. I just didn't think it was good enough to be published. Now as you know Mike is a

traditionalist and this is what he taught me from the start. I don't like it when oriental tattoos become too realistic or too funky. I mean you have to put your twist but for me it has to be bold and strong. There are exceptions of course.... some people do it and it looks brilliant. Like Shige or something....

**YOU ARE ONE OF THE FASTEST TATTOOISTS I'VE EVER SEEN. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT?**





You think? I think Filip Leu is the fastest and the best by far....I don't think the most important thing is speed. Unless we are talking about the drug. Hahaha. Lemmy will verify this. I think quality is the most important, but if you are fast too it is a bonus, you save clients pain and money.

**WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PROJECTS IN DESIGNS AND ILLUSTRATION?**

Well I started paintings for a book about Baphomet, but it's too much work. I think I'm going to quit. Hahaha. I don't have any plans I just go along....

**YOU ALWAYS HAVE ADMIRERD THE ZEN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND Gnostic BELIEFS BUT THE NEW RECORD OF YOUR BAND IS CALLED "BLACK MASSES". HOW CAN YOU DEAL WITH BOTH EXTREMES OF HUMAN**

**NATURE? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PROCESS CHURCH' THEORIES OF TRYING TO UNITE CHRIST AND SATAN IN ONE?**

Even when I was really young I was interested in all religions. I felt that it is one's duty to find the answers to life and death.

After endless studies and experiments I found the ultimate answer. It's all soooo bullshit in a sea of mumbo jumbo and mind control. All religions must be destroyed from the root.

They are the enemy of individuality free thinking self-expression and human instinct. All except one heavy metal and that will answer your question about black masses.

I'm a born again Satanist.

Hahahaha.....the Process church belongs to the same bullshitology mentioned above.no!!!!wait a minute I had a raelian awakening!!! It's funny though cause I get to tattoo all these religious images...

**BEFORE JOINING ELECTRIC WIZARD, DID YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS A FRUSTRATED ROCK STAR?**

Rock star is a big word man.. I won't use it until I come out of a limo with white boots like Malmsteen for the video. Hahahahaha. I was always the supporter of underground music and I never felt the need for recognition, but when I joined Electric Wizard I was very happy cause they were one of my favorite bands. They're total scumbugs like me.....

**AS MUCH AS THIS COULD EITHER BE A CLICHÉ: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL THAT TAKING DRUGS AS A TEENAGER ACTED AS A CATALYST OR A KEY FOR YOUR ARTISTIC VISION?**

Oooh, this is tricky....I always thought that drugs don't make you anything, a creep maybe. If someone is a visionary though for sure drugs will boost his creativity. But if someone is



## TATTOO ARTIST

a normal drug user it will only push him further down to hell!!!

**NOW YOU ARE STARTING A BIG EUROPEAN TOUR WITH ELECTRIC WIZARD AND SOME BIG FESTIVALS. DO A LOT OF THE NEW PEOPLE YOU MEET IN OTHER BANDS OR IN THE AUDIENCE WANT TO GET TATTOOED BY YOU?**

No, not at all. People in the wizard gigs are mostly heavies you know, maybe they got tattoos but they don't care about the tattoo scene or something...normally they come screaming at your face things like, yeeeeeeaaaahhhh or doooooooooom. They're crazy you know. And wasted....

**HOW BALANCED IS YOUR LIFE BETWEEN MUSIC AND TATTOOING THESE DAYS?**

I think I'm all right. I may cancel a few appointments here and there.... nothing too much.

**EVERYBODY LOVES LISTS. PLEASE GIVE US YOUR TOP FAVORITE TATTOOISTS OF ALL TIME AND YOUR FAVORITE BANDS.**

Aaaaaaa. Tattooists: Mike the Athens, Yorg, Christ, Alex Binnie, Curly, Filip Leu, Horioshy III, Mick of Zurich, Mr X, Ratattoo, Freddy Corbin .... and you...Bands? My god....Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Venom, Hellhammer, Celtic Frost,

early Slayer, Possessed, Saint Vitus, Pentagram, Cirith Ungol, Angel witch and of course MERCYFUL FATE!!!

**DO YOU THINK TATTOOS ARE IMPORTANT FOR SOME REASON?**

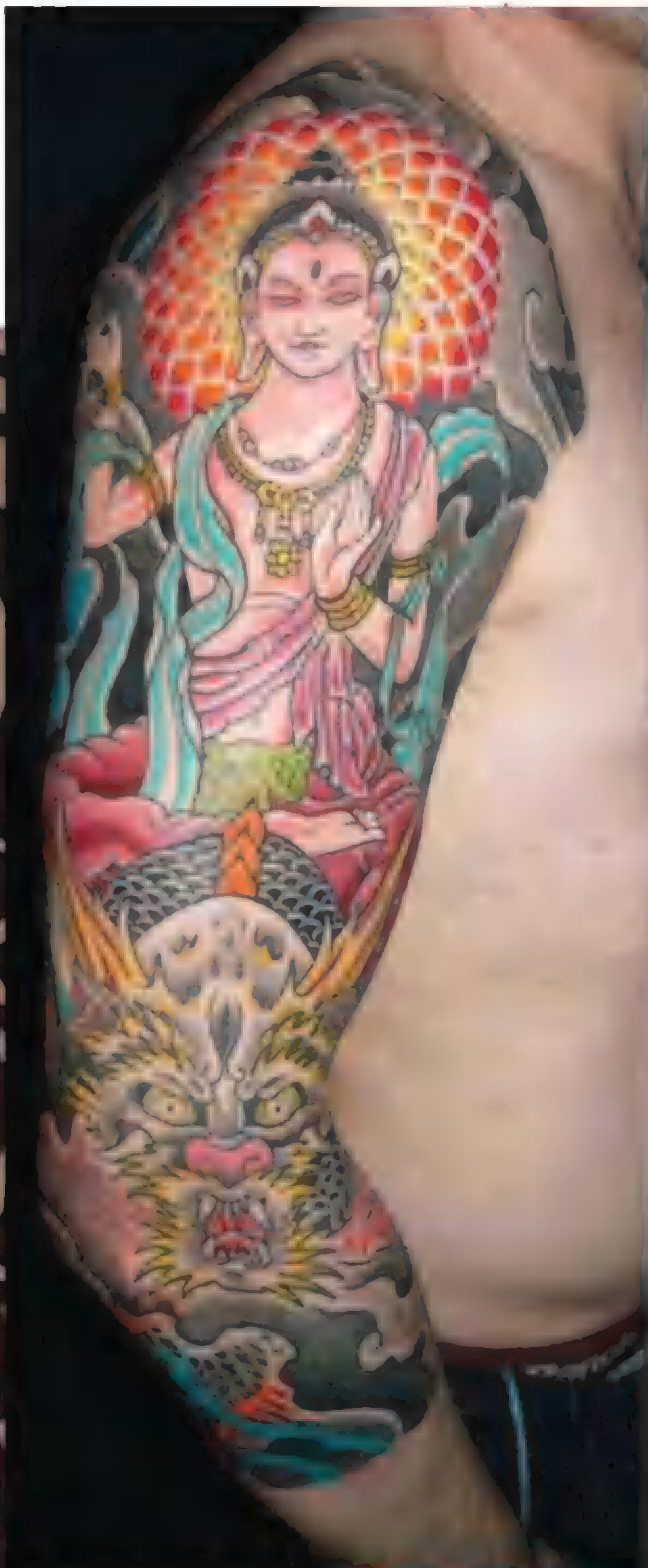
I think they are....I mean mine scare people away which is great!!!! And make ugly people have sex!!!! What else do you want!!!!

**WHAT DO YOU THINK THERE IS AFTER DEATH AT THE END?**

I think there will be the end of death, right? H.P. Lovecraft said: and with strange aeons even death will die....

**IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE YOU WANT TO ADD ABOUT THE FUTURE OF TATTOOING IN GENERAL?**

Hmmm, not really.... and forgive my laconic answers. I don't like talking much.... I would like to thank Miki Vialletto though for his constant support.





## THE TRADITIONAL FOLDER



An art book with over 60 sheets representing the most beautiful expressions of the traditional style. Traditional is the red line, the password used by the artists to give shape to their creativity. Hearts, daggers, pin-ups and religious symbols have taken shape and color and formed this long artistic tradition on skin now collected in one big book.

**€ 270**  
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## WALK IN TATTOOS

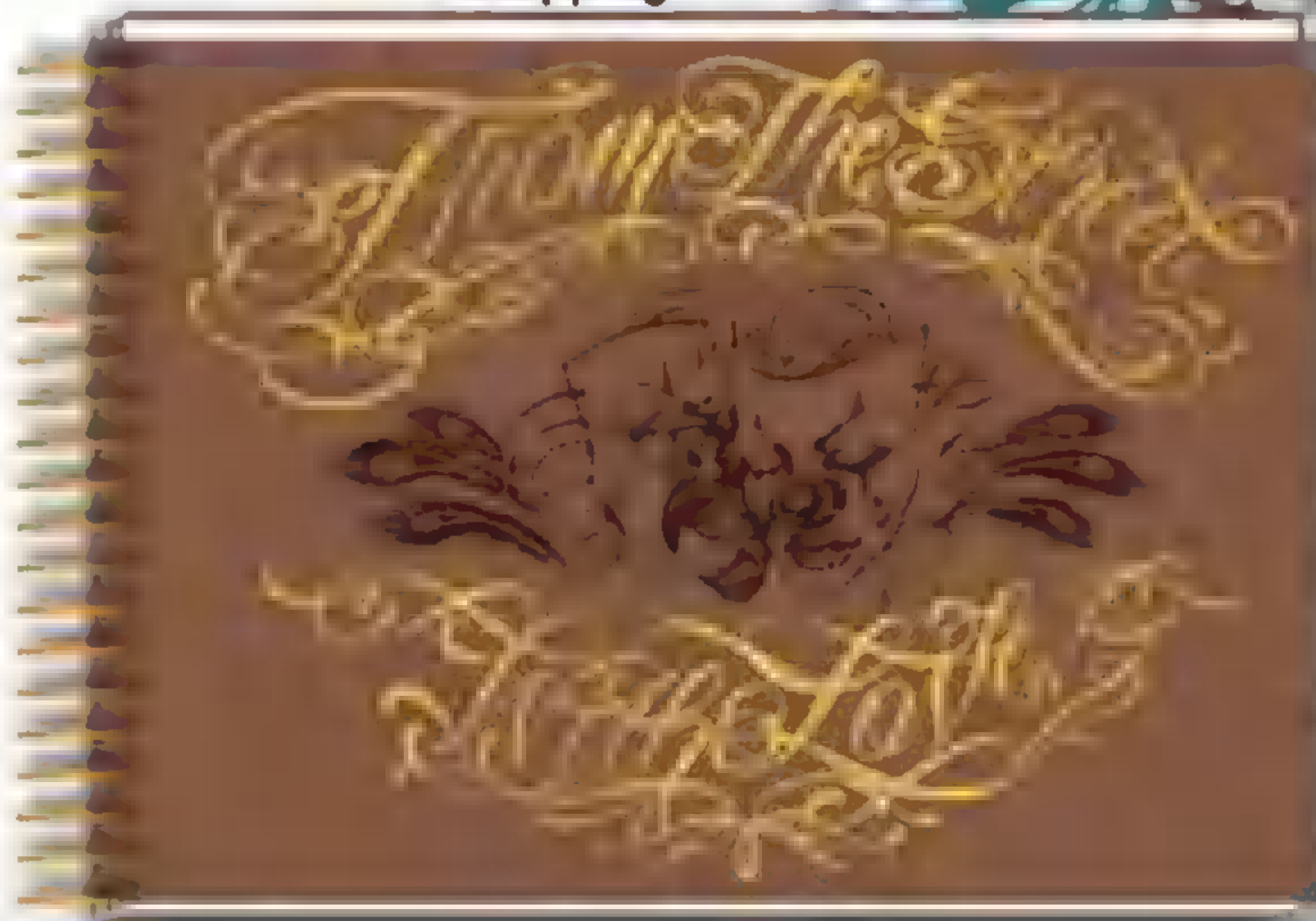


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An extraordinary collection of flash by one of the masters of American tattoo: Phil Sims, the godfather of tattoo. A very intense visual and symbolic journey. A journey from the 70's to date through a unique and amazingly modern collection of flash.

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This great book on tattoo art will take you on a journey through 150 illustrated sheets in the explosive vitality of the Chicano-style, made by the master of this style: Boog. Over 1000 original black and white and color drawings. A collection of amazingly intense sheets you just can't miss.

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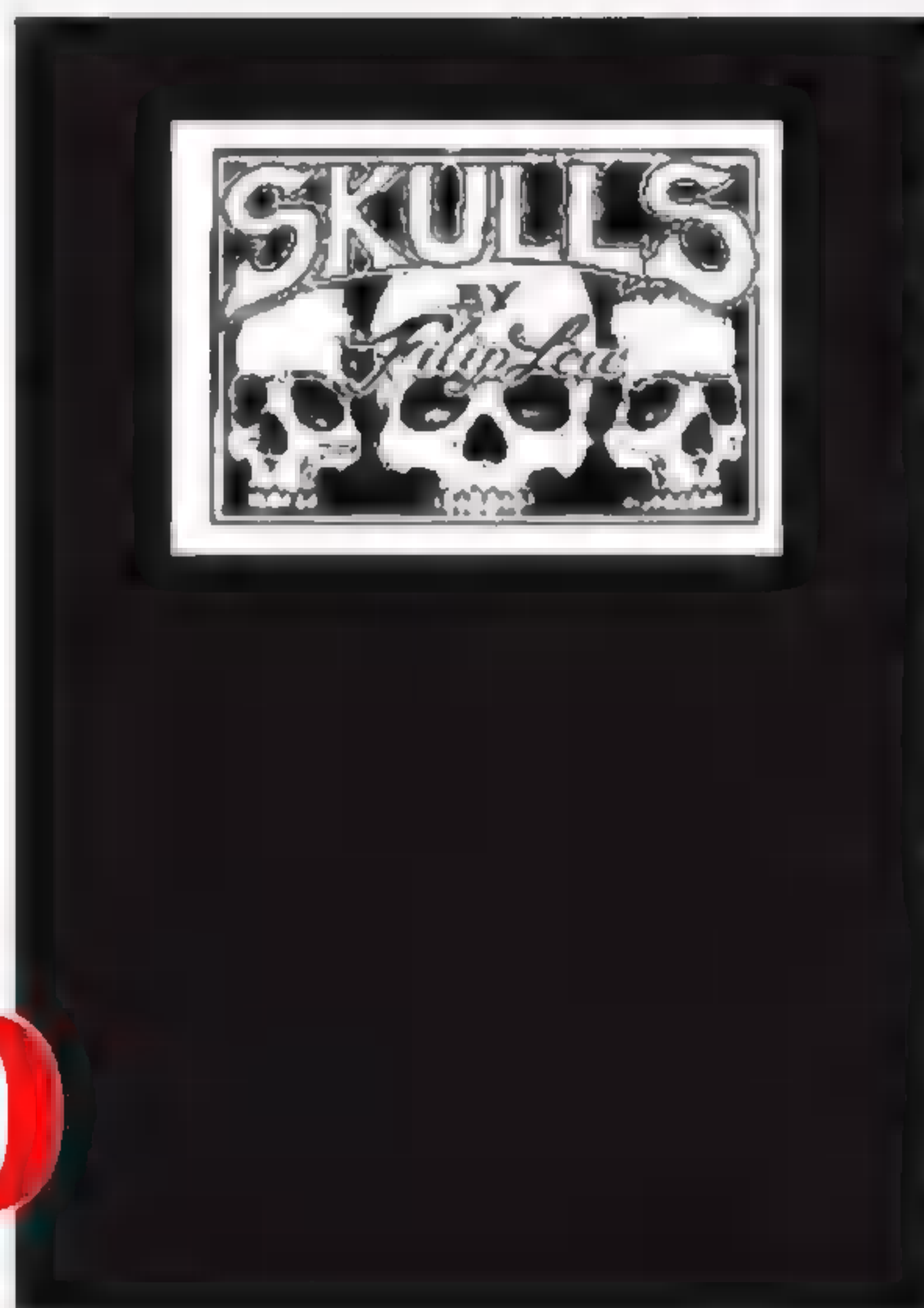
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PAINTINGS

# Pens and Needles

TEXT BY MARGHERITA B., PHOTOS BY DANIEL MILES

London Miles Gallery  
Westbourne Studios.  
242 Acklam road. Unit 303.  
London. W10 5JJ  
[www.londonmiles.com/pens-and-needles.html](http://www.londonmiles.com/pens-and-needles.html)

Dragon Girl By Claudia Sabe

**“FORGET EVERYTHING YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT TATTOO ART. FOR THE FIRST UK ART EXHIBITION OF ITS KIND, LONDON MILES INVITES A SELECTION OF THE WORLD’S TOP TATTOO ARTISTS, DOCUMENTARIANS, AND ENTHUSIASTS TO FINALLY LIBERATE US FROM THE LAST OF THOSE SCRATCHED ON, FADING ABOMINATIONS...OUR MANIFESTO? NO MORE ‘I LOVE MUM’”**

A comparison between art on skin and art on canvas all there to discover, through paintings, photos and tattoo. This is the exhibition Pens and Needles, hosted by the London Miles Gallery (London), an important exhibition center specialized in low brow art, attentive to the new trends of contemporary art, including tattoo... The tattooist of Jolie Rouge, Claudia Sabe, who worked on this project together with the curator of the gallery Tina, creating a mix of media and artistic performances to find an







Tie Fighter, Matt Difa



Freddy

answer to the question: which are the boundaries, the social-cultural context and the representations of contemporary tattoo?

**CLAUDIA TELL US ABOUT HOW THE IDEA FOR THIS EXHIBITION DEDICATED TO TATTOO ART CAME ABOUT FOR A "TRADITIONAL" ART GALLERY SUCH AS LONDON MILES GALLERY.**

One day last year, the guys from the Jolie Rouge studio and I decided to go see an exhibition in a new gallery here in London that Lord, the apprentice, had heard about. The exhibit presented the works of over 40 artists from all over the world, mostly of the new low brow art movement. London Miles, the name of the gallery, Westbourne studios the location. As we reached this historical area of London, between Portobello road and Westbourne park, we found ourselves in

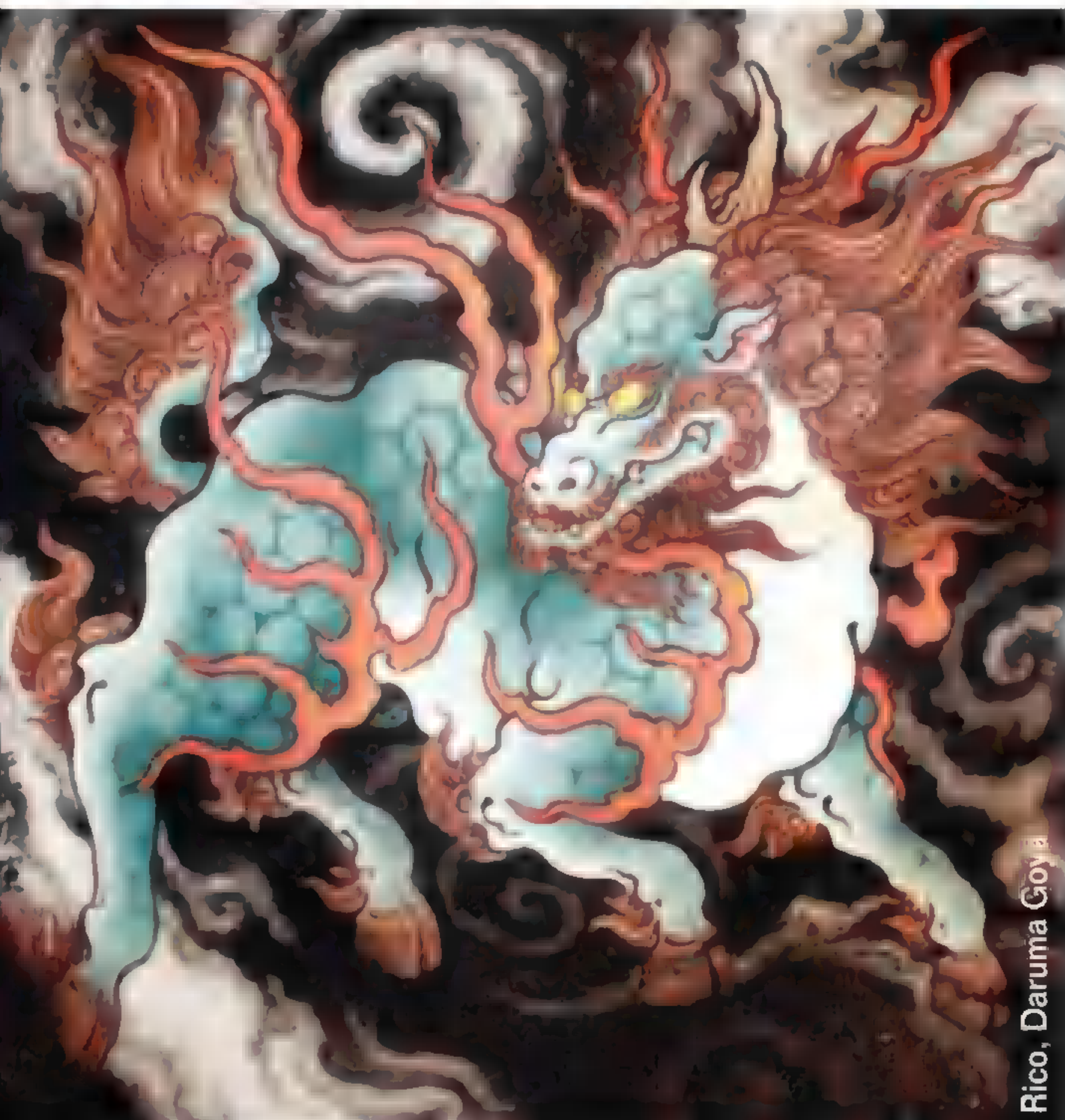


Caterang-I, Nadine C.





Finders Keepers



Rico, Daruma Goya

front of an enormous purple building that was partly built under a bridge. A bit uncertain we walked in and we found ourselves in an entrance hall with tall ceilings and internal balconies with palm trees more than 3 meters tall. In this vast space, where a group of people was sitting on comfortable leather sofas holding an auction and others were drinking coffee in the lounge bar restaurant, here was the exhibition. Forty paintings hanging from walls and pillars in the center of the space decorated and defined the central space of the great entrance hall. The works of art included some of the



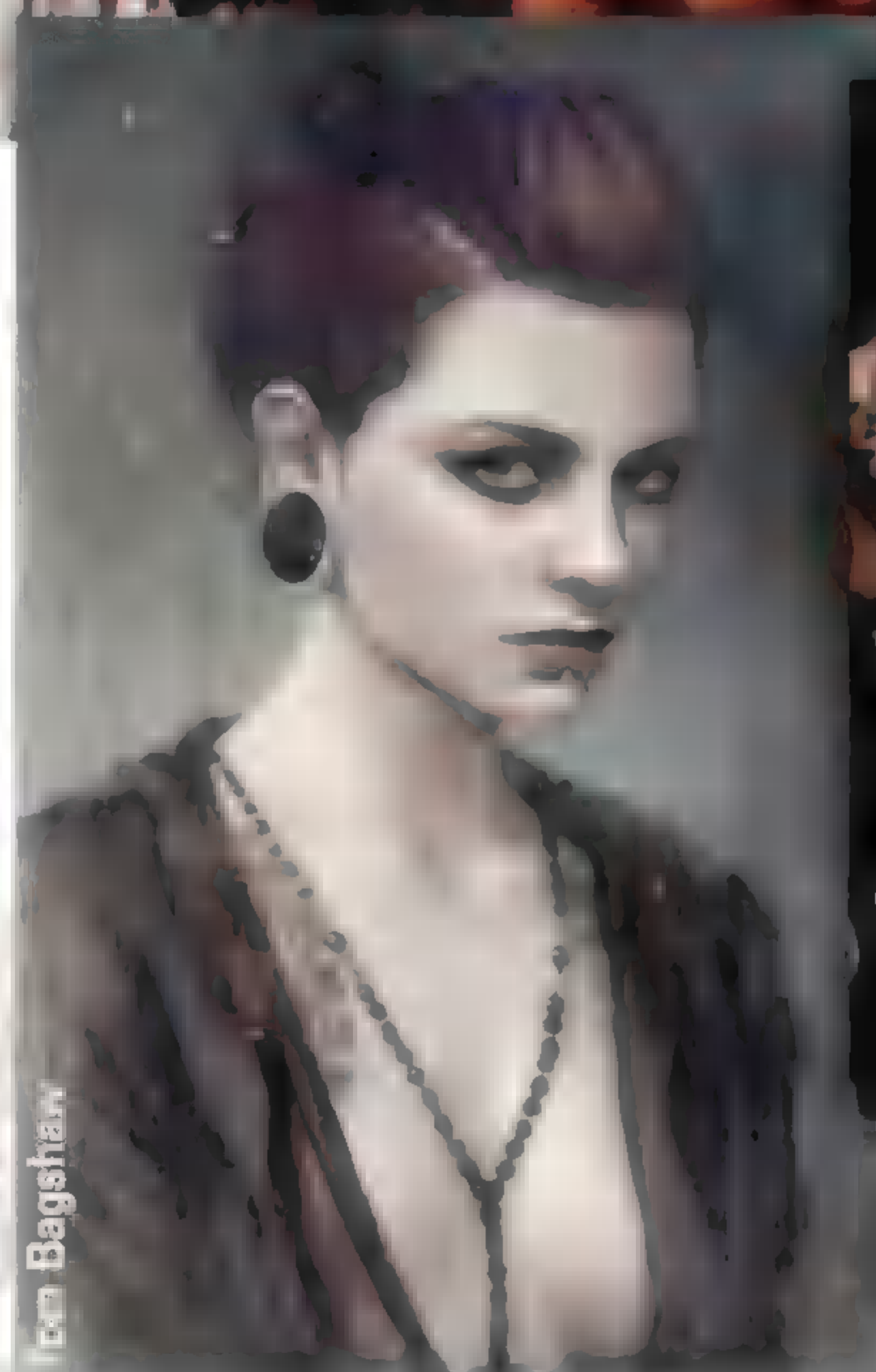
enter the gallery. The first impression was positive for both and we immediately went to her office where dozens of other fantastic works were hanging from the walls. We spoke about tattoo art and Tina expressed her interest in organizing an exhibition on tattoo art. I immediately offered to help, mostly because of my strong interest for art in general, and secondly because the idea was linked to the tattoo world. From then on Tina and I spoke frequently and we started to outline the



Shawn Barber

## PAINTINGS

# Pens and Needles



Icon Bagshaw



idea for the exhibition in the following months.

## WHICH LAYOUT HAVE YOU COME UP WITH FOR THIS EXHIBIT?

Tina right from the beginning wanted to show a large number of visitors the different aspect of the tattoo world, from the social-cultural background of the tattooists, to the aspects closer to the skills needed to do this job seriously. We worked on it together and in a couple of hours we decided to dedicate a section of the exhibition to photos that could outline the social environment of the artists, another section dedicated to works made by artists, not tattooists, but based on tattoo imagery.

## AND HOW WAS THE PART DEDICATED TO TATTOOISTS ORGANIZED?

First of all I tried to explain to Tina how many different possibilities and styles we had to cover to offer a thorough presentation and how important it was to make people understand how stylistically art on skin had precise rules that were different from art on canvas. So we decided to leave the tattooists free to choose between: simply creating a painting for the exhibition; producing a painting that would then be tattooed



following the various steps – from the initial idea, with preparatory sketches, to the stencils used to transfer the image on skin, to the photos of the freehand drawing on skin, up to the creation of the tattoo –; as third option, tattooists could choose to create a completely different painting from the tattoo presented through the different phases of the painting itself.

#### HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE ARTISTS?

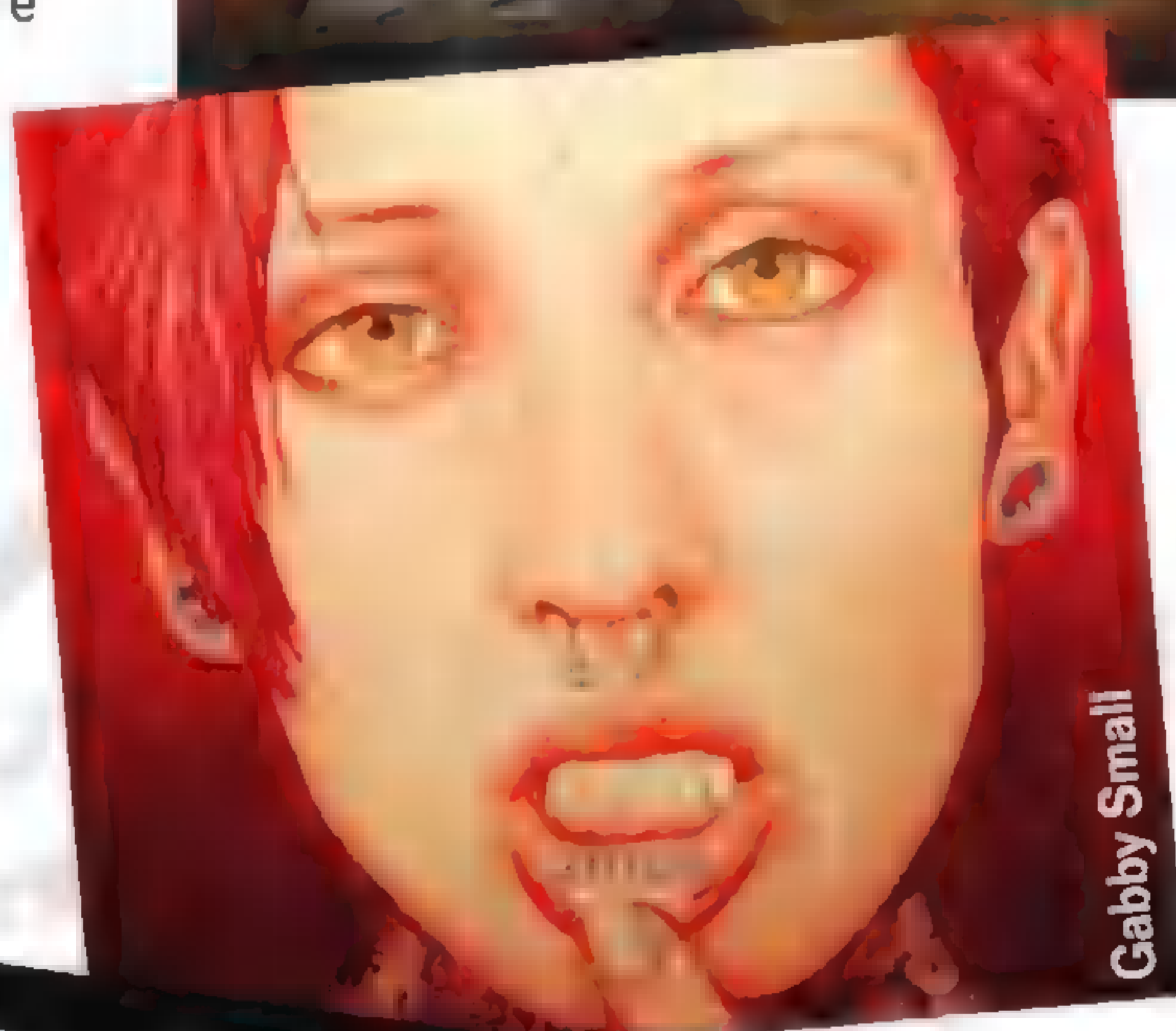
This was the most difficult part for me. I wanted the final result to give as much as possible the idea of the variety and broadness of styles and genres, showing at the same time top quality and absolutely original works. Tina took care of the artists and photographers and I drew up the list of tattooists, that was then approved by Tina. According to the availability of the people we contacted we were able to have some very unique artists and it was amazing to see works fly in from all corners of the world.

#### THE FINAL LINE-UP?

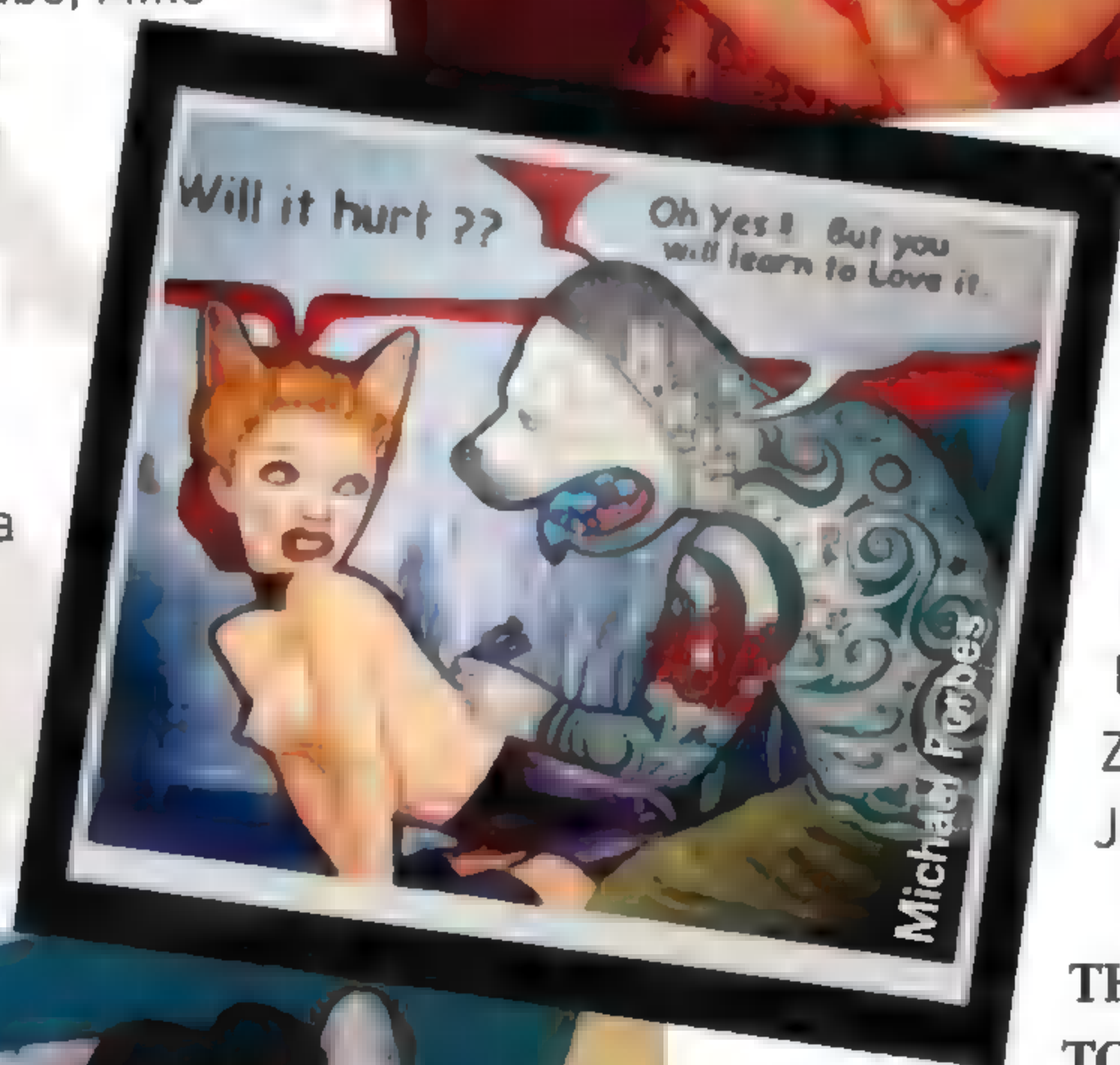
Shawn Barber, Claudia Sabe, Mike Davis, Matt Difa, Xam, Olli Bery, Daniel Albrigo, Holy Fox, Jeff Gogue, Tom Bagshaw, Alex Young, Jondix, Jee Sayalero, Gustavo Rimada, Cate Rangle, Estevan Oriol, Lea Nahon, Bart Bingham, Rico, Horishion, Issac Fainkujen, Nick Baxter, Nick Colella, Alex



Mike Davies



Gabby Small



Binnie, Al Overdrive, Nicola Andrews, Michael Forbes, Kerry Evans, William Zdan, Adam Jackson.

#### THE OPENING TOOK PLACE

#### AT THE END OF FEBRUARY, RIGHT?

Yes, exactly, Tina found the name for the exhibition and worked non-stop to organize the opening party. Charissa Gregson, one of the artists that works with us at the Jolie Rouge, tattooed live for three hours in a studio specifically created in the center of the hall of the Westbourne Studios. Tina really tried to make the show a big success which hundreds of people took part in showing interest for the variety of works presented and for the live tattooing part with



which the art gallery regulars usually don't come into contact with. From my point of view, being able to come into contact with such a number of people out of the tattoo world and show how tattoo is more than just fashion, trends, soccer players and reality shows, was the real strong point. Just as showing the works that every real custom artist, regardless of the style – newskool, oldschool, Japanese or black work – must face daily, and how many of us are not simply craftsmen but also artists constantly looking for ideas, shapes and inspiration.

#### ALSO THE IDEA OF JOINING TATTOOISTS AND OTHER ARTISTS WAS VERY INTERESTING...

I think having artists who are not tattooists was interesting as a comparison between two different worlds and that today intertwine one with the other in equal ways. It was an exceptional experience for me, a chance to have here in London paintings from colleagues that I admire a lot and people I didn't know before. I thank Tina for this collaboration and her professionalism which really gave me a lot and all the people involved, from the artists (tattooists and other) to the collaborators of the gallery and of Jolie Rouge, for the mega and ongoing support.





# CAPT DON LESLIE

BY LUISA GNECCHI RUSCONE - PHOTOS FROM THE BOOK CAPT DON LESLIE BY MADAME CHINCHILLA

Capt. Don Leslie is one of the last members of that group of circus artists who performed in circuses and fairs around Europe and the United States with their bodies entirely covered with tattoos from the nineteenth century up to the mid twentieth century and at the same time he even tattooed people from the audience who asked him. At the end of World War 2 there were so many injured soldiers that the freak shows were considered disrespectful and they basically disappeared from circuses along with the "most tattooed men and women in the world" that had attracted lots of people up to that moment. And thanks to them tattoo culture spread around Europe and the United States and the first tattoo shops were opened by sailors mainly in sea towns.

He was born in Cambridge (Massachusetts) on December 26, 1937, at 15 Leslie ran away from

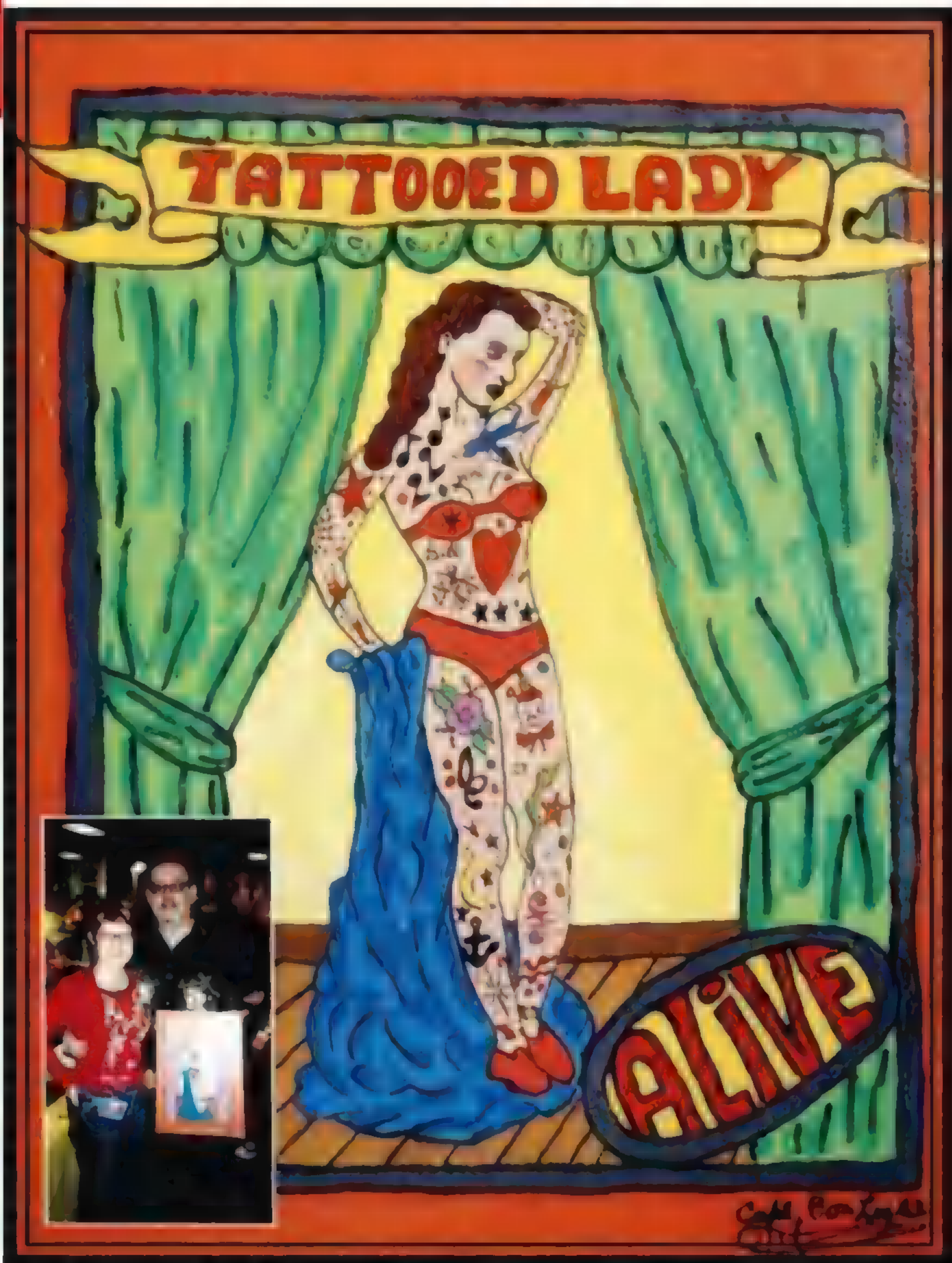
home to follow the circus, but soon afterwards he was found by the police and sent back home. The following year he ran away again, but never returned. He followed the circus until he turned 18 and then joined the Navy. After finishing service he returned to the circus and stayed for 55 years.

«I don't understand those who follow the status quo (conformists).

I have always been attracted by crazy people and outcasts. I love eccentric people, rascals, those who live on the edge, those who take risks and I have always tried to be one of them.

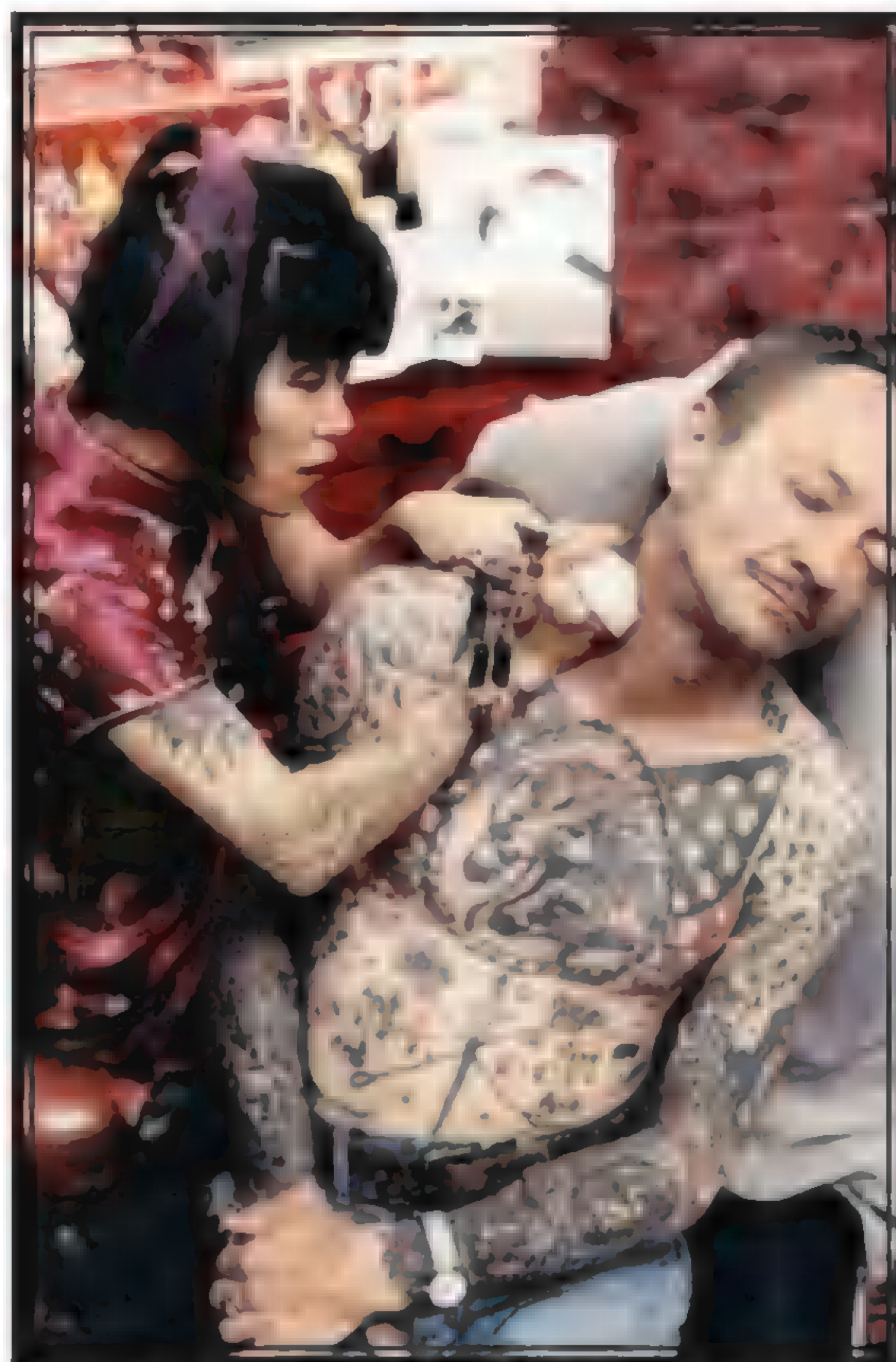
My saying is: "When in Rome do what the Romans do!"

In 1952, still a child, Capt. Don Leslie decided that he wanted to be in the circus. At the beginning he was a Pony Boy (he took children for pony rides) and the 'Candy Butcher' (he cut candies from large caramelized sugar blocks), after he became a good fire eater, sword



R. J. and Dottie take home one of Capt. Don's Tattooed Ladies from the Tattoos and Blues Convention, Santa Rosa, California 2002.





Electric Innies tattooing a 'Magic Butterfly' on the Capt. 1985



"I was the tattooed man in the movie Beloved with Danny Glover and Oprah Windfrey in 1997"

swallower, a presenter and a tattooist...

"...I was lucky enough to work in the circus when it was a very popular thing: I happened to be in the right place and the right time! I was able to work with the most famous circus artists of the time: Betty Broadbent, Sealo, Johann Peterson The Giant Viking, the famous Family of dwarves, Dolly who also appeared in the movie with Judy Garland The Wizard of OZ'..."

"... The desire to get a tattoo is something inspired by the beauty they represent: I had seen them on the arms of the sailors during World War 2 and since I was a child, without even realizing it, I knew that in some way they represented a statement of freedom, the symbolic witness of the fact that "I belong to myself". The decision to get my entire body tattooed depended on my decision to join the circus as a tattooed performer..."

"... My tattoos mean lots of different things to me, they represent the idea that I would like others to have of me and they remind me of personal things that only I know of. Each one tells a story. Sometimes the thing I wanted to say with a tattooed design wasn't expressed clearly, so I would cover it with another tattoo closer to the truth. I choose the drawings of my tattoo calmly trying to be as much as possible in contact with my conscience. My tattoos are me, myself."...



After Capt. Don retired, to supplement his fixed income he painted these 'Tattooed Women' and banners. Electric Innies Lee & I sold raffle tickets for them at Bert Rodriguez's Tattoos & Blues Conventions in Santa Rosa, California for 10 years.





Sideshow by Capt. Don, private collection Jan Hinson

# SWORD SALAD

A vibrant, hand-drawn illustration featuring a central shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant contains a yellow crescent moon and three stars (green, blue, and purple). The top-right quadrant shows a red sun with rays. The bottom-left quadrant has a large white star. The bottom-right quadrant displays a white starburst or flower-like pattern. Surrounding the shield are numerous swords and daggers of various colors (blue, orange, black, silver) and designs, some with curved blades and others with straight blades. The background is a solid light blue. At the top, a yellow banner with black outlines contains the text "SWORD SALAD" in a stylized, hand-drawn font. In the bottom right corner, there is a small signature that appears to read "Caitlin 2017".



In 1953 Capt. Don Leslie met Betty Broadbent who worked for the Cristiani Circus. When they met he had a broken jaw blocked by iron wire: he was drunk and behaved poorly. He received a lesson from her that he never forgot. From then on Betty was like a mother to him, maternal and protective but also a guide who taught him good manners with people and how to behave properly at work.

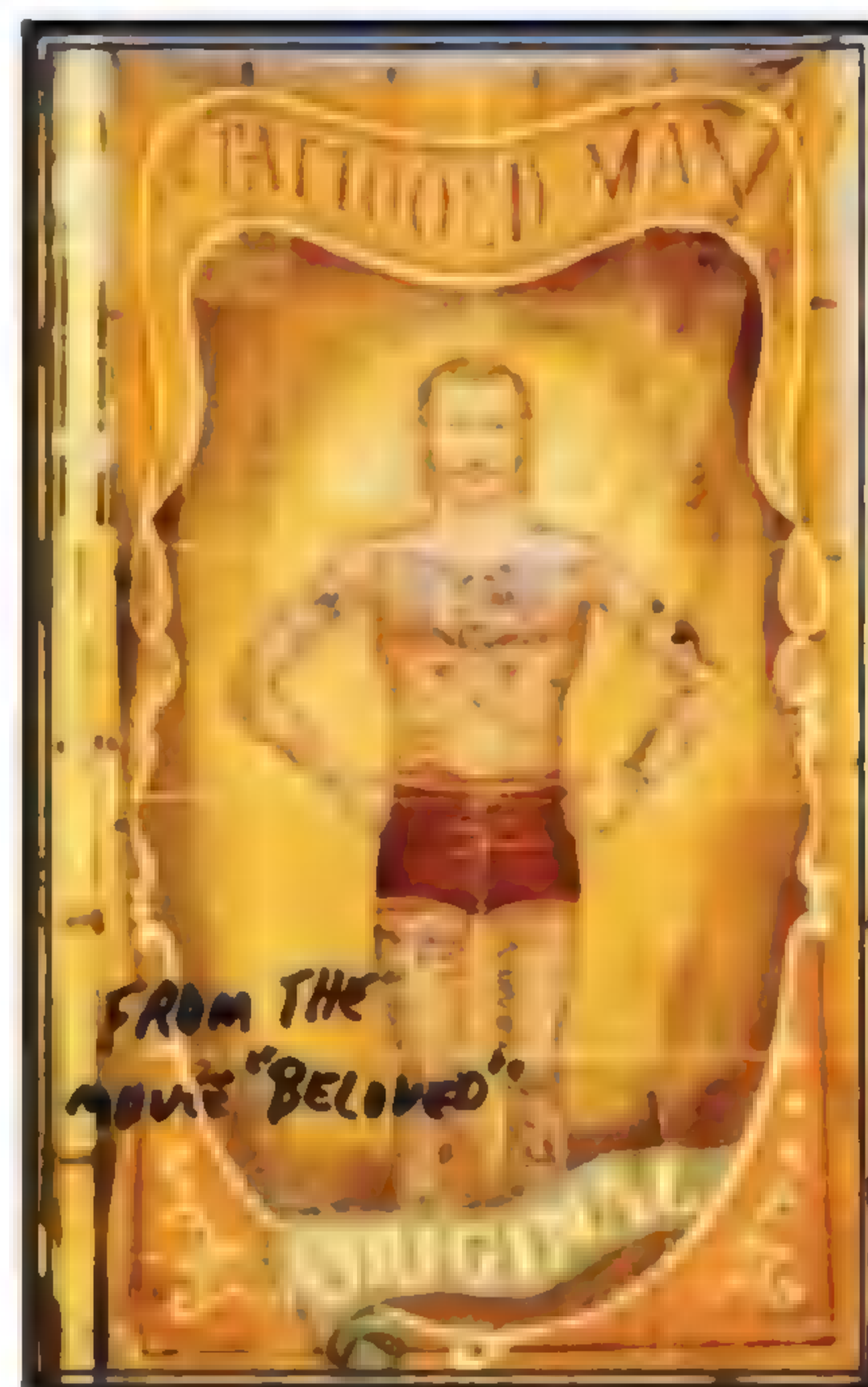
Charlie Rurke, Betty's husband, ventriloquist and manager of the Cristiani Brother Circus Sideshow gave Don Leslie the nickname of "Captain Donald Leslie". The meeting with Betty and the decision that he would become the tattooed attraction in the circus all happened at once.

"...Lee Roy had just opened his tattoo shop in Los Angeles, he hadn't been tattooing from some time and needed some skin to practice on. We agreed on a modest price per week and the promise that I would always mention his name during my

shows, in exchange for this Lee would have tattooed my entire "body suit" so that I could perform in the season of '56 with the Cristiani Bros Circus. Lee Roy was very impressed by the fact that I was a sword swallower. He introduced me to a young tattooist, Lyle Tuttle who was getting some of his tattoos touched up, they were 20-30 years old. At the same time he was getting his body suit finished in Bert Grimm's shop: he was getting tattooed by Bert Grimm and Bobby Shaw. Bert's studio was on Long Beach Pike and Lyle opened his on a nearby street. Lyle was very fascinated by the fact that I was a sword swallower and we made a deal: he would tattoo me and I would teach him how to swallow swords."

In 1961 Capt. Don Leslie opened his first tattoo studio in Key West, Florida. One night he tattooed the drawing of a couple doing 69/96 on the arm of a young sailor. Back on the ship the young sailor put the tattoo in the sun and it became very swollen. He had to get it checked by a doctor and the doctor asked him who tattooed it. The day after he was arrested and accused of damaging the property of the US army, of drawing an obscene tattoo on a young man and of tattooing without a proper license. The mother was able to find a lawyer who convinced the authorities to withdraw the accusations if he went to court in Florida. Given that at the time in Florida there were no laws on tattooing, the court dropped all accusations and he was set free.

Capt. Don Leslie also wrote twenty-five songs on tattoos collected on a record and then a CD. One of his songs speaks about the tattooing machine, the "machine gun":  
 "...Guns kill people. Tattoos change the life of people for the better. I grew up in a



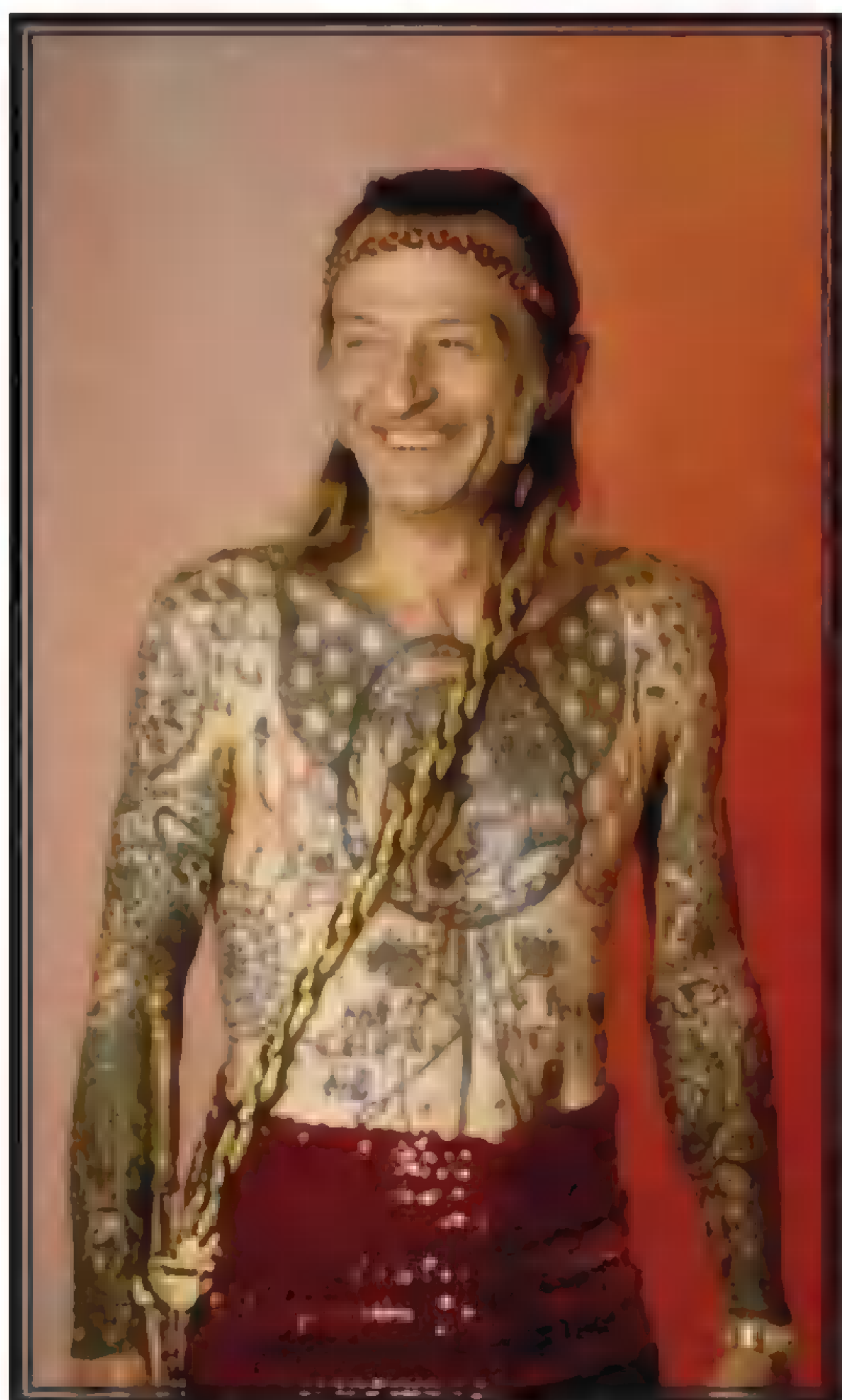
This banner was made exclusively for the film Beloved. Capt. Don was the 'Tattooed Man' in the Sideshow. He asked for the banner as payment for his part in the film. He was informed the banner would be included in the Walt Disney Archives.

tattoo family, the tattoo community welcomes all those who have a tattoo, if he wants it or not; the tattoo family welcomes people who are well aware of what the tattoo world is. Tattooing doesn't mean putting pigment on skin, it also means where we come from, and how long we have been on the earth. Our primitive ancestors were tattooed, the ancestors of those who are not tattooed today were also tattooed, whether we like it or not."

Capt Don Leslie died in 2007.



Book orders:  
[chinchilla@triangletattoo.com](mailto:chinchilla@triangletattoo.com)



Late 1980s, photo credit Deidre Lamb Photography



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FLASH

# Leonardo "Leo" Denegri



I was born in Buenos Aires, and I currently work at Rubi's Atomic Tattoo (Barcelona) and I work with Javi Castaño, Carolina Angel and Alvaro "Llorar", with one of the most innovative studios in Barcelona, the Barcelona Electric. This series of flash was designed for the past edition of the convention held in Barna. I wanted to offer a taste of Japanese iconography which is really interesting for me as concerns aesthetics and in many cases, for its symbolic meaning, even though I don't

have a deep knowledge of this style. For creating the designs I studied illustrations, drawings and tattoos made by the Japanese masters, but also popular Japanese stories were very important given I prefer those linked to the animal and super-natural world. I designed this flash thinking of the uniqueness of each image, in order to give ideas to small tattoo collectors, given that during conventions I like to create pieces that can be finished in just one session, and I like working on bigger tattoos in the studio, which

is much more quiet. The series is for sale and open to change. Those who are interested can contact me at the following addresses:

Info:  
[denegritattoos@gmail.com](mailto:denegritattoos@gmail.com)  
[www.atomictattooart.com](http://www.atomictattooart.com)  
[www.barcelonaelectrictattoo.com](http://www.barcelonaelectrictattoo.com)



FLASH

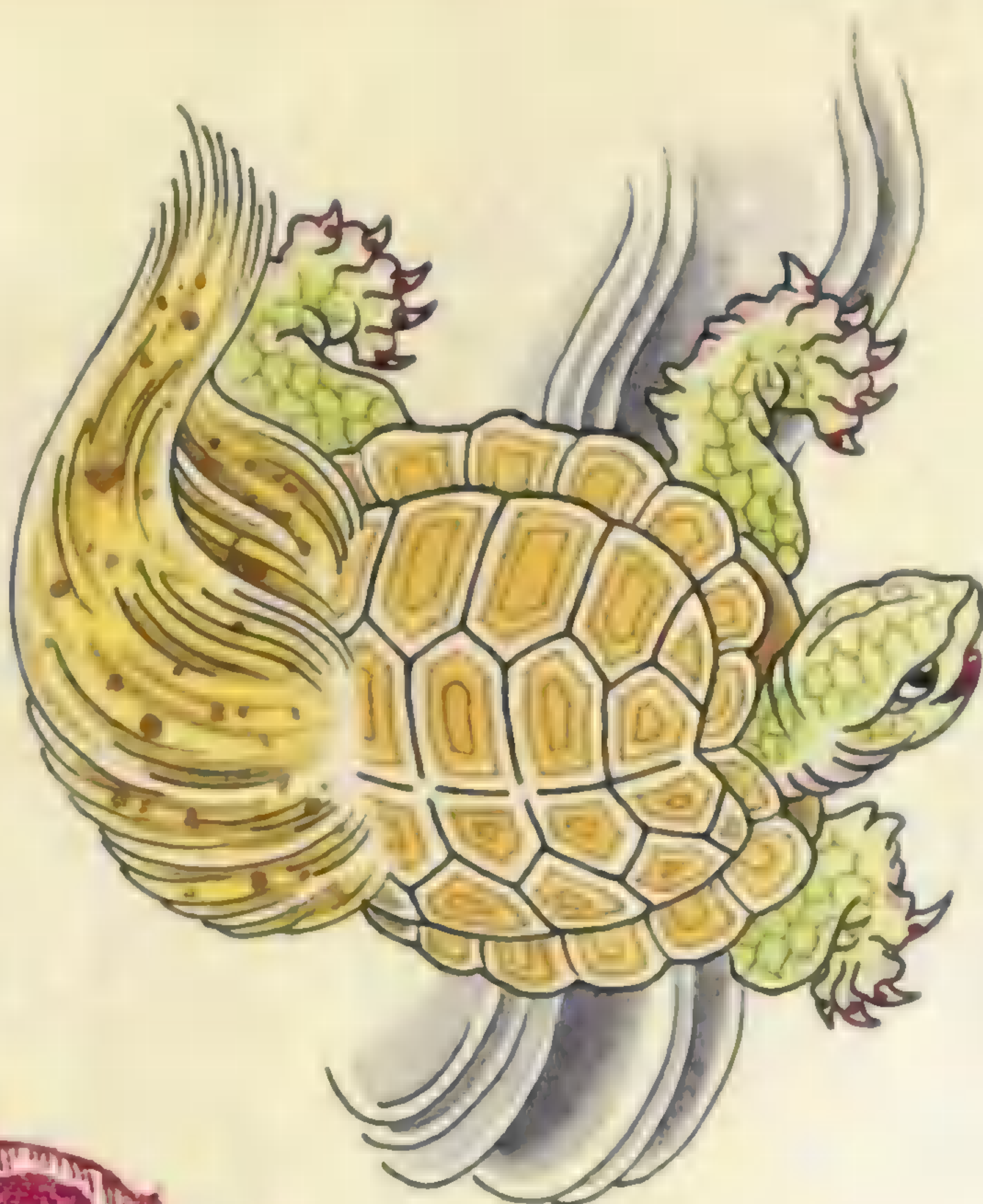
DENEGRÍ '10





FLASH

ДЕНЕБРИ '90





STORY

STORY BY ROLF MESSLING

Illustrations by Titine & Filip Leu

# rattlesnakes & co.

A white, fluorescent flash bolted across the floor of my cell moving towards the white wall. Damn scorpion! Morgan got up and followed the insect. Before the scorpion could reach shelter in a crack in the wall, he crushed it with his heel. He frowned with disgust. The indescribable red mush stained the heel of his shoes. I immediately thought about those boots, a pair of snake leather Durango! They had cost me a lot. To get those fucking boots I had to risk my own life... I only had one thing left now: the electric chair, the gas chamber or the lethal injection.

Everything started a few months earlier, in a village on the road between Austin and Laredo, not far from the Mexican border, during a risky trip across the United States. I got fed up with New York. Too many disappointments, too much pain, unbearable memories... Livia left me without saying a word, without any explanations. For a few weeks I had coped pretty well, then one day, I said that's enough: I had closed the studio, took my tattooing machines, a box of inks and needles, a couple sets of flash and a folder with the tattoos I was most proud of. I decided to drive across the country on my '76 Mustang Shelby, a solitary traveller with a suitcase full of despair... Encinal! I remembered the name of that dusty village not far from San Antonio. Basically a ghost town, where I had found that incredible little store. I was looking for a bar to quench my thirst and soothe my irritated throat from the sand that I had swallowed all day long.

I had been drawn by the window, smudged with grease and dirt, behind which you could barely see the objects, clothes, shoes, fake Indian fetish and other little things all made out of snake skin. The sign

warned the passer-bys: Supersnake Joe, with red and gold letters, painted on a simple wooden table beat up by the dry wind of the desert. Pushed by curiosity, I walked in...

The inside was exactly as I had imagined. An incredible confusion! I could hardly see the objects. The entire store was fairly dark. I stopped and squinted my eyes. Unusual smells reached my nostrils. The store smelled like formaldehyde and old dust. I walked around. It was all a mess; I had to make my way through a pile of vests, jackets, boots and bunches of rattlesnake tails that rang like little bells when I touched them. The shelves that ran along the walls were filled with glasses with some strange fluid inside with rattlesnakes wrapped around themselves floating in it. Not far there were packages of dry snake skin, that were waiting to be transformed in clothes, shoes or other things.

«Anybody there?», I asked, crushed by that dark and dusty atmosphere. I heard a dull sound. It sounded like it was coming from the back of that strange store. I stopped and listened. After holding my breath for a bit I heard a heavy noise of feet dragging on the floor. I thought: «Must be a big guy!». Behind a super crammed shelf I could see a large figure. I thought the head of the shop owner touched the ceiling and that his large body occupied all the space available. «Yes», he said, «Who's there?». Impressed by the size of the guy who was coming closer as if he walked on quick sand, I started shaking. I said: «I saw a pair of snake skin boots in the window and I would like to...» I wasn't able to finish the sentence. The shop owner stood right in front of me. I suddenly felt very small, miserable. «You like those boots, right!» It wasn't a question but a statement. I timidly nodded. «I don't sell anything to strangers!».

«Hmm... Now that we have met», said the strange shop owner, «I have to show you my treasures». The sound of his words reached my eyes like filtered by a mix of strange noises that echoed in my head. I was almost unconscious. I looked at the four bottles of that strange liquor the giant shop owner forced me to drink. «You look like a nice guy», he said sitting in a rocking chair on the other side of the table. «You like to drink and you are no longer a stranger, now that you told me all about yourself». I shook my head. I tried to push away the fog that was making me dizzy. I tried to get up. I had to hold on to the table not to fall on the floor. «Shit... I am drunk». Very carefully and slowly I took a step forward trying to follow the giant that was walking to the back of the store, asking me to follow him. «So you are a tattooist...». It wasn't a question. He just simply said it out loud. Totally confused, I followed him. I held onto all the shelves I could reach not to fall. «A tattooist, interesting!», shouted the giant opening the door. A flash of light hit my eyes. I covered my eyes with my forearm. «So what do you think?». The giant's voice came from a strange figure, worn by the violence of that powerful light. I could hear the boring noise of a generator, that was needed to produce such a light. I was in a giant hangar, like a greenhouse. Besides the sunlight that was filtering through the windows, some reflectors sent a bright light on a stretch of red sand, yellow rock and several cactus plants that formed an incredible scenario in that large natural greenhouse. The giant, basically, had recreated a piece of desert in his own home! The horrible cactus liquor that the guy had made me drink made me dizzy. Waves of madness violently hit the rock of neurons in my brain. I couldn't see clearly. I felt nauseous. Squeezing my eyelids and trying real hard I was able to see, behind the glass wall, an unusual movement of things that made me freeze. There in the middle of the plants I saw the snakes.





That incredible sandy area had hundreds, maybe thousands of reptiles. Some, wrapped around themselves, kept warm under the lights and the sun that came in through the windows; others traced strange messages in the sand as quick as lightening.

Ever since I was a child, I had always been afraid of snakes. A sort of phobia, an irrational feeling. Whenever I saw one my stomach twisted, I became like stone. This obsession, along with the alcohol, not to mention I felt drunk, left me petrified.

«Now that you are here, I want you to make the dream of a lifetime come true: I want to be tattooed so that I look like my dear pets. My entire body! I want lots of scales just like them, smooth and powerful like theirs. You are going to make me into a rattlesnake and ...finally I can live with them!». The words of this strange guy were like filtered through this thick fog; it was as if he were dozens of meters away from me. Then unexpectedly, the sense of what he was saying suddenly was clear. I tried to protest:

«You are crazy. I can't do it!»

«In exchange», he continued without even thinking about my protests, «you will get the boots you like, without having to pay for them. A gift!».

I said no with my head, but before I could say anything, before I could refuse the offer, he added:

«You can get anything you want from my shop. You can have it all!».

Basically I couldn't say anything anymore.

«I'll give you everything!».

I tried:

«When I walked in here I just wanted to know the price of those boots...I just wanted you to tell me how much they cost, to know if I had enough money to buy them...»

«Enough, they are yours... and the rest of the store too, if you want it!».

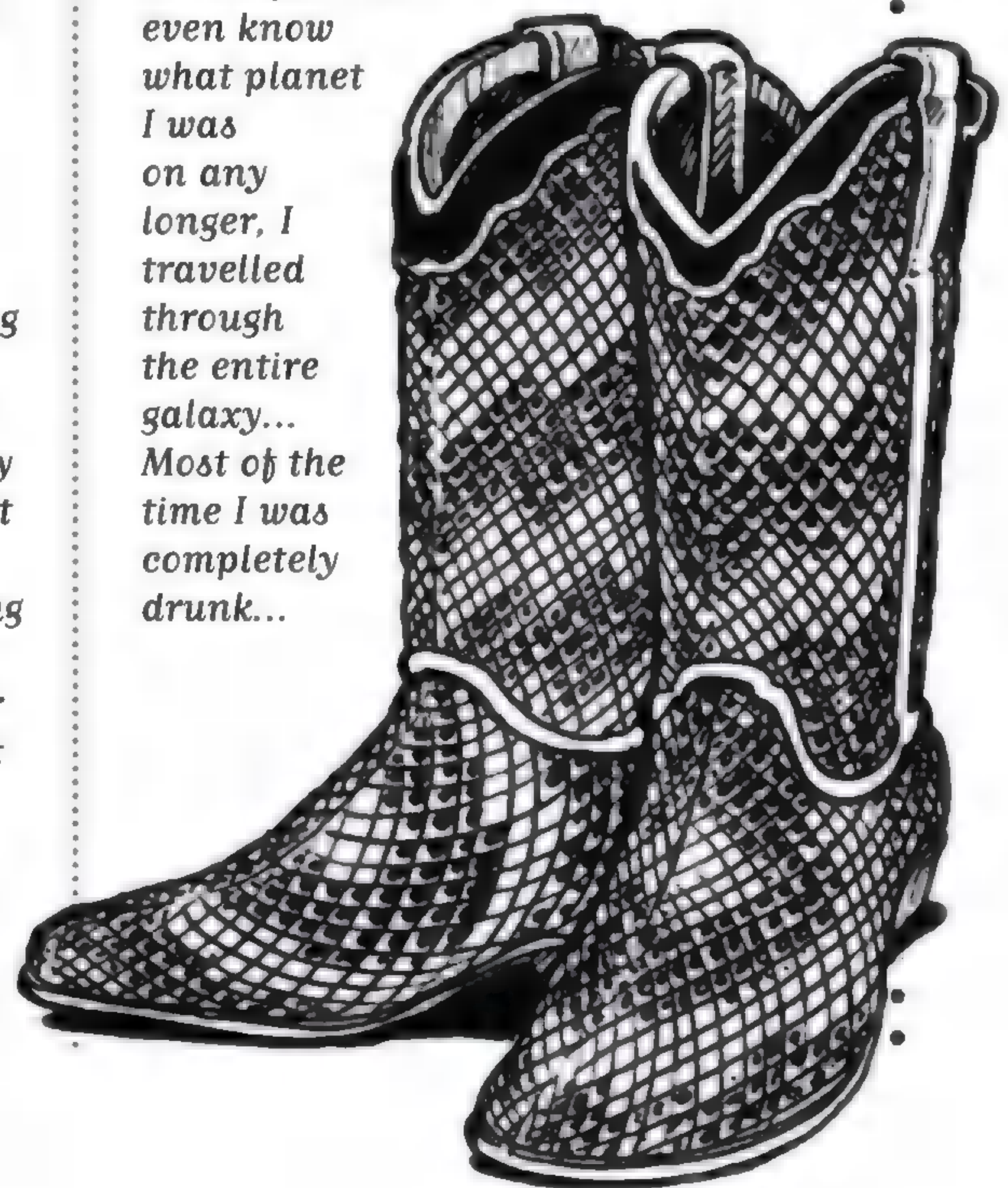
I must admit I really didn't have to think about it much. It was a great deal. Those great boots, I really wanted them...so badly. I accepted. I still hadn't realized the work that was ahead of me. I understood it only when I started drawing the different parts of the body. My head was giving me problems. How could I draw a rattlesnake head on that crazy guy?

I had spent days and nights drawing the scales on the different parts of the body. The shop owner had prepared a studio in a room right by the greenhouse, then he went I don't know where to buy all I needed for the tattoo. I worked without stopping and couldn't help but think about all those reptiles in the sand, under the bright light of the reflectors, not far from us. I was praying that the area with the snakes was perfectly closed off. I often shook thinking about that those ugly animals could creep into the room through

the cracks, move under my drawing table and bite my calf or ankle. I was in a state of constant anxiety...

Captured by the passion for the drawing, I didn't even realize how fast time was going. I stayed in my studio, in front of the large windows. It was like drawing out in the middle of a desert. The heat was suffocating and I drank a lot. My bizarre guest regularly came by with drinks that I couldn't even figure out, I didn't know where they came from or what they were. I was completely out from morning to night. Completely out of my mind.

Actually, I didn't even know what planet I was on any longer, I travelled through the entire galaxy... Most of the time I was completely drunk...





# rattlesnakes

## STORY

The most difficult thing was the complicated drawing of the scales of the rattlesnakes. They were before my eyes all day long, damn rattlesnakes they moved around on the other side of the glass staring at me with their eyes circled in a fierce red color. As time went by I started to think that the snakes were trying to memorize my throat. The more time passed the more snakes arrived. They all looked the same. They were just a moving bunch of animals from which a head occasionally popped up and looked my way, in a cold way like death and this made me shake.

Drawing the head was really difficult. Even if the strange shop owner had a triangular and boney head, I really had to sweat my shirt off to draw a convincing transformation. In the end I realized that despite the fever and my being drunk, I managed to make something fairly realistic. I was ready. I told my guest.

It was a terrible job! I spent hours and hours getting his legs, back, buttocks, chest and face tattooed (this was the most difficult part) with irregular lines, almost like pixels, all black, to make them look like scales. I had lost track of time. Afterwards I started coloring: hues that went from brown-red to white sand, scale after scale.

The days went by. I constantly punched my customer's skin from morning to night before dropping dead tired in bed, drunk from work and strange liquors. My universe was confined to that little room filled with rattlesnakes and the wall. I felt my head heavy with fog. My strange patient didn't speak a word, not a complaint. He just wanted to drink his cactus liquor in silence.

As my work progressed, I felt like I was in front of a reptile. It looked pretty good. Every time he looked himself in the mirror he had specifically hung on the wall, he felt satisfied. He felt mesmerized by his own reflection. We didn't even speak

to each other anymore. We were both nervous, obsessed, completely mad.

When I had finished, the guy really looked like a rattlesnake. He gave me the boots, the object of my desire. He gave them to me without saying a word, then he went towards the snakes and walked in. He laid down in the sand, then he curled around a cactus. He started to move like a snake. He moved towards the bunch of snakes and disappeared covered by the snakes. I kept hearing their rattling tails moving nervously.

Through the glass wall, I saw the snakes move towards the door that had been left open. An ugly moving group of snakes. Dark, horrible bunch...I could just hear their rattling tails...in that confusion I couldn't even spot the shape of the person I had transformed into a snake.

Scared I ran through the dark store holding my boots. When I stepped out I hear somebody yell. An cruel sound that sounded like never-ending and that followed me for a while as I was running towards the country border...

Laredo... the Mexican border. I was waiting for this as a sort of liberation from all my nightmares, all my ghosts that followed me around, finally I was here... handcuffs on my wrists, crushed between two giant policemen. They captured me while I was sleeping on a rock on the desert. Too bad! Now I'm locked in this dirty cell. I'm waiting to be taken to Austin for...

The trial was quick. Those damn boots betrayed me. The dead body of that mad man was found in the store.

Someone had seen me go in and witnessed against me. And since I was wearing those damn boots, the judge believed I had killed the guy to steal the boots. Let me tell you: bad luck!

They gave me the death sentence. If only I could sleep. But the picture of those rattlesnakes everywhere just haunts me. I can even hear the sound of their damn tails. Unbearable...and the irony of all this: they took my boots away. «You won't need these where you are going», said the policeman smiling.

They are transferring me tomorrow. Destination: the death row. The policeman just told me smiling. I immediately noticed the bastard was wearing my boots!

From the small window in my cell, through the bars, I could see the sunlight trying to penetrate into this dirty cell. Quick and ugly scorpions are moving around the floor of the cell. I don't feel like crushing them anymore. I just want to look at them, listening to the noise made by the rattlesnakes outside under my window.

They are making fun of me, damn snakes! I know it.





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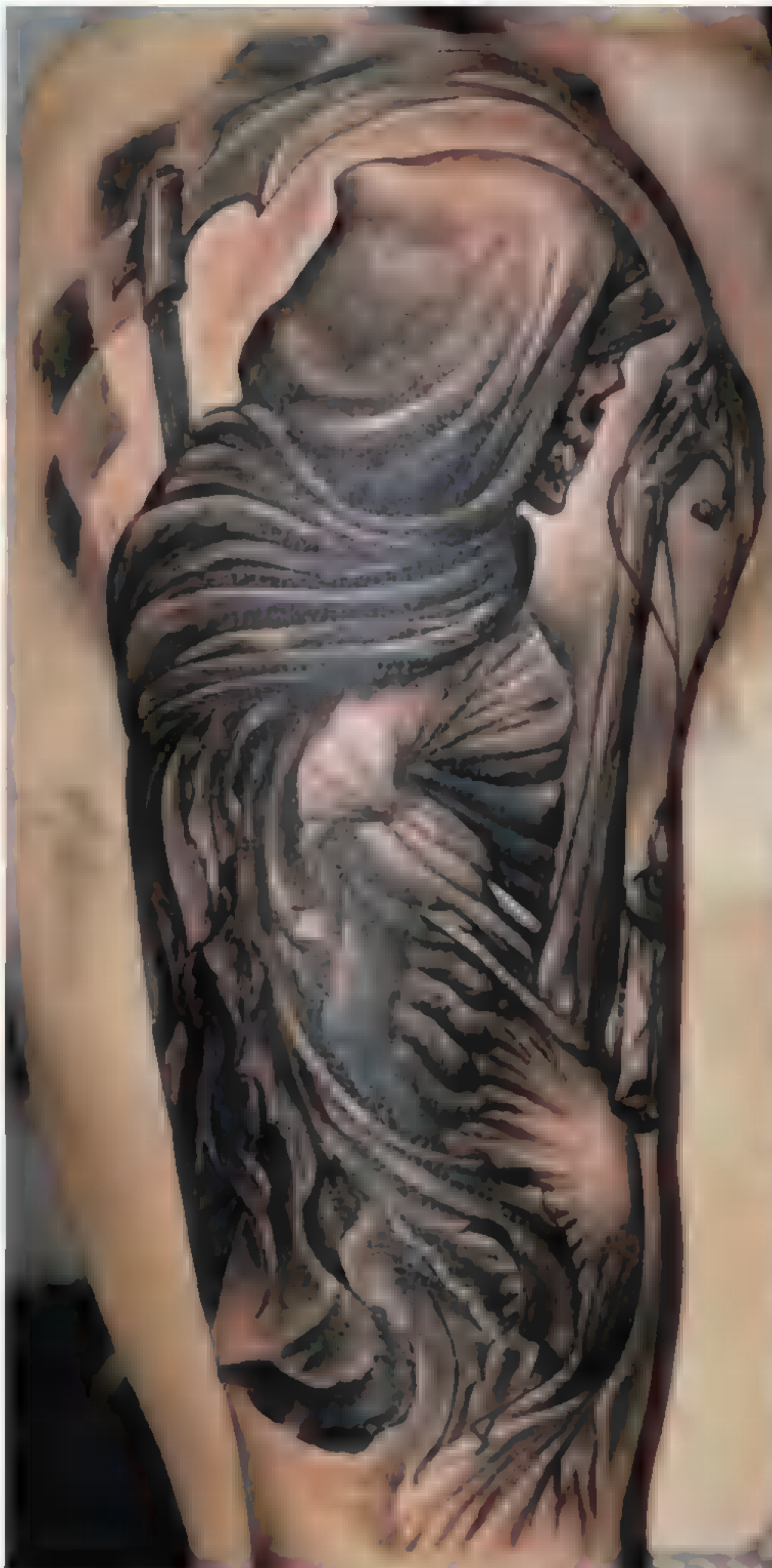
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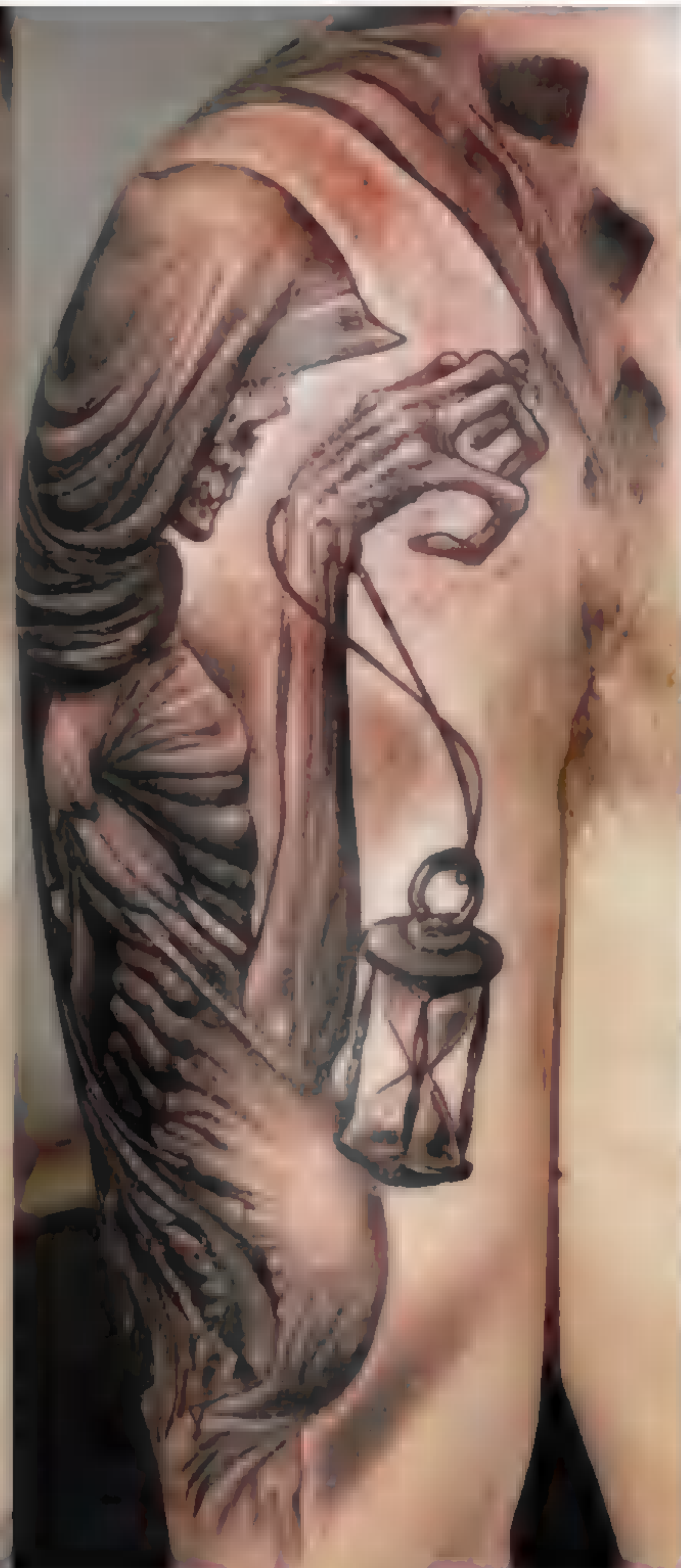




Adam Hays, Sacred Gallery NYC, New York, USA



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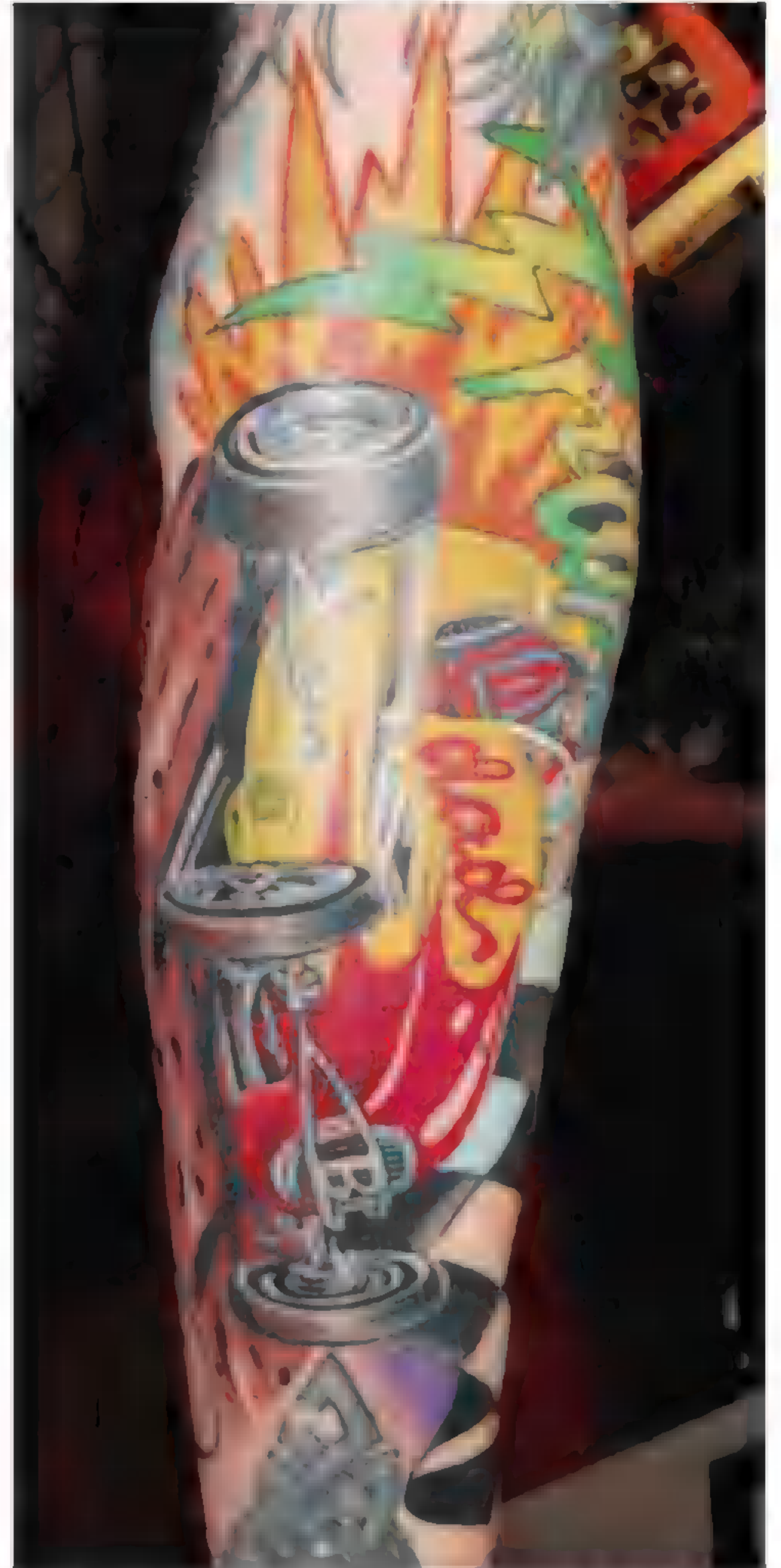
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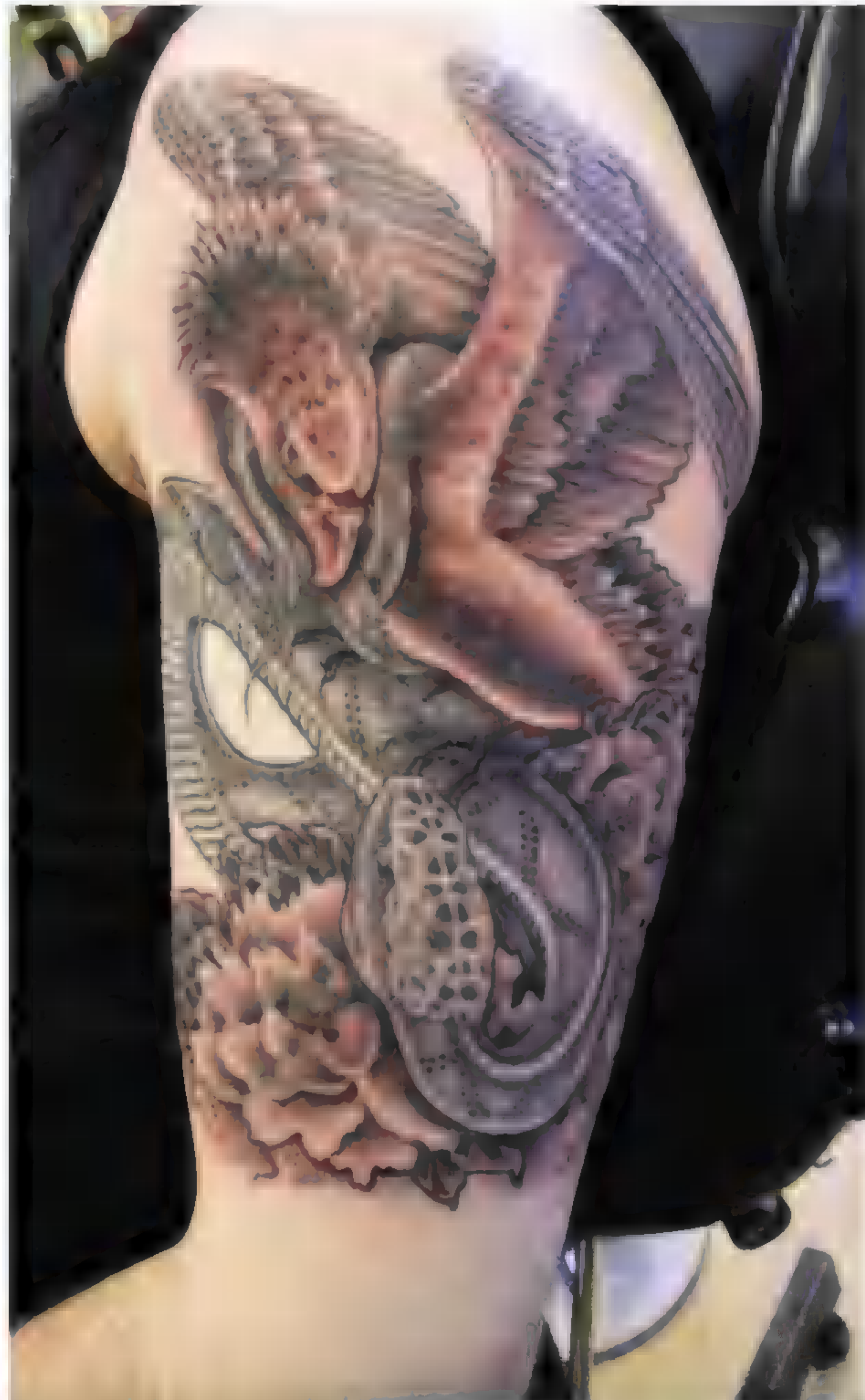


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